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NOTES  
ON THE  
PROPHECIES OF ZECHARIAH

*Mrs. MACLACHLAN, Senr.*



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**WORKS BY MRS. MACLACHLAN, *Senr.***

(OF MACLACHLAN).

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NOTES  
ON THE  
PROPHECIES OF ZECHARIAH

BY  
MRS. MACLACHLAN, SENR.  
(OF MACLACHLAN)



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## PREFACE.

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It is not wonderful that Zechariah has been pronounced the most difficult book of Scripture to interpret, because, its subject having been mistaken, it has been persistently applied to wrong people, at a wrong time, and in wrong places, by a wrong system of interpretation.

It is a fact, which it is to be hoped may be soon better understood than it is at present, that the Church of Christ, though gathering out from "the beginning," was "a mystery *hid* from ages and from generations," till in "abundance of revelations" it was explained to the Apostle Paul. The Church, therefore, cannot be the subject of Zechariah's prophecies, although several of great importance were fulfilled at the Redeemer's first advent.

The Messiah came to die for the Jewish nation, and to procure for Himself *a kingdom*: a *kingdom* so literal, glorious, and future, it is marvellous how the extension of the visible church among the Gentiles could ever have been prayed for, as the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

That kingdom, and the manner in which He will take and establish it, are plainly predicted by Zechariah; his

prophecies were all written *after* the Jews' return from their seventy years' captivity in Babylon, and refer to it as a past event: the restoration he predicts is the yet future and perfect in-gathering of the Jewish people from every quarter of the world into their promised land.

The God of Israel, whose word cannot be broken, gave an *unconditional* promise (confirmed with an oath) to Abraham that his seed shall possess the land of Canaan for ever and ever, which as yet they have occupied but a very little while.

It has been taught most erroneously that the Jews, having broken the covenant of *works* made with them in the wilderness four hundred and thirty years *after* the Abrahamic covenant, the covenants with Israel are at an end, and that God now has only a spiritual people. But the breaking of the covenant of works had no power whatever to nullify the everlasting unconditional covenant made with Abraham. Therefore Jehovah has only for a time cast off and forsaken his beloved people Israel, and has not put Gentiles into their place, as is proved by his having no direct *personal* or *miraculous* dealings with Gentiles, as he had and will have again ere very long with his chosen people.

The Messiah absents Himself from the world whilst the Jews' national sins oblige Him to punish them by hiding his face in wrath: but "He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel," and at the set time they will call unto Him and seek to be forgiven; then He will answer by an outpouring of His spirit to sustain and comfort the repentant remnant in the great

tribulation of the last days. In the meantime he is gathering out from among all nations by "the Gospel of the grace of God," "without the deeds of the law," an elect people to reign with Him in super-heavenly glory.

His kingdom will consist of two spheres, super-heavenly for Himself and the Church (or Bride); heavenly, or "the kingdom of heaven upon the earth," for the Jews and all other nations. The world redeemed from the curse at "the restitution of all things" will then be made new, and better than at the first when created very good.

After long monopoly by the Gentiles of God's promises to the Jews, it is beginning to be perceived that they have yet, as a nation, a glorious future in store for them. The prophecies of Zechariah make this so very plain, it is matter of surprise how such a truth could ever have been long concealed as it has been. What is called spiritualizing the prophecies from the Jewish nation to the Gentile church in great measure accounts for this; but, in reality, that is the consequence of the Will of God in faithfulness to Israel, to "shut up and seal the visions of Daniel and the Revelation until "the time of the end;" whereby double fulfilments of Scripture, such as the first and second advents, now known to be widely apart, were supposed to relate to the same event.

In truth, the time the Jews have been dispersed among the Gentiles since the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans is *a gap or perfect blank* in Bible history, which waits for their primary and partial restoration to Palestine in unbelief; and then "the time of the end" will soon after

begin, and all unfulfilled prophecies be quickly accomplished.

We do not shrink from declaring here that the way to understand the prophecies of Zechariah, and every other part of the Bible, is to compare scripture with scripture, giving to every word exactly the same signification as to the same words in other books. God has declared his purposes in such "multiplied visions and similitudes," that no earnest-minded searcher will ever seek in vain to understand them; but it is absolutely necessary to apply to anything "closed up and sealed" the proper key with which to open it; and to the Scriptures the Jew is the key with his miraculous history past and to come.

H. M<sup>c</sup>L.

BOURNEMOUTH, 1880.

# NOTES

## ON THE

### PROPHECIES OF ZECHARIAH.

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#### CHAPTER I.

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

THIS verse teaches the *time* when this vision was shown to the prophet—and *who* he was. Though Zechariah saw the vision in the days of Darius, he was made to see, as is usual in prophecy, near and very distant events as if close together, thus rendering the prophecies applicable to primary and minor fulfilments, but still more to ultimate and plenary accomplishments.

2 The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers.

The displeasure of Jehovah against Israel as a nation has been manifested by the dispersions of the Jews from His land, the last not being ended yet. Still He loves them for the father's sake (Rom. xi. 28, 5); He gathers the elect into His church, and hath not cast off His people (as a nation) for ever (Rom. xi. 2, 15).

3 Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.

4 Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye now from your

evil ways, and *from* your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord.

They are even now invited by the prophecies in God's Word to turn to Jehovah. As a nation they must turn to Him *first* (Isa. lv. 6, 7), (as the prodigal did, Luke xv. 18), and then the Father will turn to them (Mal. iii. 7), and receive them "graciously" (see Hos. xiv. 1, 2). Though this is certainly a *moral* turning, it is a *national* one, and does not in the least teach that the elect now can turn to God of themselves, without the Spirit's converting and drawing power. We know the Jews are still undergoing the punishment incurred by the fathers who crucified the Lord of Glory and blasphemed the Holy Ghost, these being the grievous national sins of which that evil generation have not repented yet; therefore this is an invitation to be accepted in future time. It is the same invitation as Peter addressed to the Jews at Pentecost, saying (Acts iii. 19-21), "Repent ye (or *turn* ye) that your sins *may be* blotted out, *that* the times of refreshing *may come* from the presence of the Lord, and (when ye are turned, or have repented), He shall send Jesus (the) Christ, whom the heaven must receive (or retain) *until* the times of restitution of all things." *These times* not being yet come, the Jews' moral turning, or change of heart and mind (2 Cor. iii. 15, 16), has also yet to come.

Zechariah here says unto them ("in the time of *the end*," Dan. xii. 4, 9), the same as Isaiah, in chapter i. 16, 17: "cease to do evil, learn to *do well*." How to do this they will learn from Moses and the prophets; for "in *that day* shall the deaf hear the words of *the book*: they that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine" (Isa. xxix. 18, 24). Till "*that day*" (time) the book will remain "sealed" or "shut up" to them; but in "*the latter days*"

"it shall be scanned from end to end, and knowledge shall be increased" . . . . "none of the wicked shall understand, but the *wise* (the godly Jewish remnant) shall understand" (Dan. xii. 4, 10.)

5 Your fathers, where *are* they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?

6 But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.

One generation after another has been taken away into captivities, and often national sins have been punished with sword, famine, and pestilence: all prophets have disappeared; and now "the place and nation" even of the Jews *is* taken away by the Romans (John xi. 48); therefore Jehovah's words have all come true, and he has justly dealt with this sinful and adulterous generation "*according to their ways and doings.*"

7 Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which *is* the month Sebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

8 I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that *were* in the bottom; and behind him *were there* red horses, speckled, and white.

This vision was seen shortly after the preceding, which is quite like a preface or introduction to those which follow.

These visions, seen by night, concern the then afflicted state of the Jews, but sometimes relate to "*the night*" (Isa. xxi. 11) that is to precede "the morning of joy" (Psa. xxx. 5).

The *man* riding upon the red horse is Jehovah, the Logos or pre-existing *Messiah*. "This man," says Rabbi



Kimchi, "is no other than The Holy One; blessed be He, for it is said, 'The Lord is a man of war upon a red horse;'" and the Rev. A. McCaul observes: "This is a remarkable testimony to the belief of the ancient Jews, that He, who appeared in the form of a man, as the angel of the Lord, was the God of Israel." He is represented as on a *red* horse, because in Scripture He is called "a man of *war*" (Exod. xv. 3; Isa. xlii. 13) when about to chastise the Jews or destroy their enemies. We believe the different colours of the other horses in this vision betoken different sorts of judgments, because different coloured horses in the sixth chapter of Revelation represent judgments of war, pestilence, and famine. Besides this, as to colour, horses here and elsewhere (Zech. vi. 2-7) figuratively represent the angels of God, who are his messengers and agents (Heb. i. 13, 14; Psa. lxviii. 17). "So far as appears, the horses in this vision had no riders upon them: *He* that was riding was the Prince or Captain over the other angels, and therefore the prophet saw him riding."—Kimchi.

It is thought by some commentators, Jewish as well as Gentile, that myrtle trees may mean, emblematically, "the righteous," and "the bottom" the depth from which the Messiah is about to deliver them; but most likely they are only the imagery of the vision, meaning the man and the horses were seen in a valley in which were myrtle or evergreen trees.

9 Then said I, O my lord, what *are* these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these *be*.

The angel to whom Zechariah says, "O my lord," is not the man among the myrtle trees (ver. 8), but the same created "angel" that we read of again in the second chapter and third verse.

10 And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These *are they* whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.

11 And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.

When this angel that talked with Zechariah was going to explain, the Lord Himself answered Zechariah's question, telling him the different coloured horses are the superhuman agency by which He has ascertained the state of His land at that time; the time being just *before* the Jews' great tribulation, when their whole land is here represented as "quiet and at rest:" so it is also in Ezek. xxxviii. 11.

12 Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?

The created angel belonging to Jehovah (and for that reason called "the angel of the Lord") asked *Him* the question contained in this verse.

13 And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me *with* good words *and* comfortable words.

Jehovah answered the angel with comfortable words concerning Jerusalem *after* her warfare is ended: compare with Isa. xl. 2 and Isa. li. 3. We admit, of course, primary application of this and following verses to the rebuilding of the temple and cities of Judea in Zechariah's days; but we agree with Scott, the commentator, in the following quotation: "These predictions primarily related to the state of the Jews after the captivity: yet that was but a shadow of what shall take place . . . after the termination of the oppression of the New Testament Babylon."

14 So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.

15 And I am very sore displeased with the heathen *that are at ease*: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.

Zechariah is commissioned by the angel in verse 9 to prophesy the same as Dan. ii. 44 with regard to the Lord's *final* controversy with Gentile nations for Zion's sake (Isa. xxxiv. 1-8), because they "helped forward the *affliction*" of his chosen people (Hos. v. 15).

16 Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.

17 Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

Though these enemies then propose to destroy Israel from being a nation (Psa. lxxxiii. 3-5), they themselves shall be utterly destroyed, for swift as "birds flying" (Isa. xxxi. 5) will the Lord come to defend and save the Jews: and when He appears in His glory, He will build up Zion (Psa. cii. 16), His temple or house *in* Jerusalem (Zech. ii. 2; vi. 15; Ezek. xxxvii. 28), and all the cities of the land (Isa. xlv. 26; Ezek. xxxvi. 35, 36). In that day Jerusalem shall "be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city" (Isa. i. 26).

18 Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.

19 And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What *be* these? And he answered me, These *are* the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

20 And the Lord shewed me four carpenters.

21 Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These *are* the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up *their* horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.

Dr. Keith, who wrote on prophecy *fulfilled*, in the later years of his life, always explained this vision as entirely future. We agree with him in believing it predicts that these four horns symbolize four Gentile nations that will cause the *last* scattering and captivity of the Jews. They cannot be those which had scattered them at the first, for the following reasons assigned by Dr. Henderson:—"Jerome, Kimchi, Abarbanel, Vatablus, and others, have been led by the occurrence of the number four, to interpret the horns of the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman empires; but to this exegesis it has justly been objected, that of these powers two were not yet in existence, and cannot be prophetically spoken of, because the hostility described was that which had already taken place. Neither is it true that the Jews were scattered by the Persian power as they had been by the Babylonian."

By the prophet Daniel we are taught that Israel's enemies, denoted by gold, silver, brass and iron, will all be resuscitated and exist contemporaneously in the time of the end. Their destruction simultaneously, at the coming of the Stone of Israel is convincing proof of this (Dan. ii. 44, 45).

The oppression of the Jews by these horns will then be such, that "no man" will be able "to lift up his head" until the signs of the Redeemer's advent appear.

No prophecy of Scripture throws any light upon what Gentile nations friendly to the Jews, are symbolized by the four carpenters.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE promise in the fifth verse shows we must not limit what is here said of Jerusalem's restoration to the time of Zechariah and Zerubbabel; for, notwithstanding all that

is recorded of Divine favour and protection then, it is when the whole house of Israel is forgiven, and so upheld as never to be rooted out of their land any more, that Jehovah is to be unto Jerusalem "a wall of fire around her, and will be the glory in the midst of her." We cannot believe such a promise as this can belong to that city in which the Messiah was crucified, and that temple he pronounced "a den of thieves."

Those who have studied prophecy, know well, that prophets have often described approximate minor events in terms so grand as to be much more truly applicable to those important ones which will attend the consummation of all things. This is to be accounted for, by all things being ever *present* to the mind of the Spirit, to whom there is no future : in this manner we here find Zechariah predicting what is future, far more than what is past.

We therefore quite agree with Kimchi when he says, "It is certain that this vision *is of the future*, referring to the days of the Messiah, as the visions of Ezekiel in which he saw the angel measuring Jerusalem in its length and breadth " (Ezek. xlviii. 30-35).

1 I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand.

2 Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what *is* the breadth thereof, and what *is* the length thereof.

The man here (supposed to be an angel) is occupied in ascertaining the existing dimensions of Jerusalem, for a time is at hand when its length and breadth will be totally inadequate to contain the multitude of its inhabitants.

3 And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him.

The "another angel" who went out to meet the angel that talked to Zechariah (chap. i. 9), is the Logos, who although He is the Angel of the Covenant, the Manifestation of Jehovah is called "an Angel" in Num. xx. 16

Exod. xxiii. 20-23, and elsewhere. He commands the revealing Angel to give to Zechariah (then a young man) the prophecies concerning Jerusalem contained in the next verses.

4 And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited *as* towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein :

5 For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

*Previous* to the blessedness and almighty protection for Israel promised in the fifth verse, an unblest prosperity will be given to the Jews (Isa. xvii. 9, 11) immediately after their partial restoration in unbelief, when they shall dwell "in the land of unwalled villages, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates" (Ezek. xxxviii. 11, 12). *Then* they shall not dwell *safely* as they will do afterwards, when the Lord will be their defence (Isa. iv. 5), and his glory will be Jerusalem's everlasting light (Isa. lx. 1, 19, 20 ; Zeph. iii. 14, 15.)

6 Ho, ho, *come forth*, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord : for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord.

7 Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest *with* the daughter of Babylon.

Ho, is the language of calling or *demanding* attention ; it is doubled here for the sake of strength : thus it means " Ho, ho, deliver thyself, O Zion." Many Scriptures declare that God's chosen people shall be gathered from the *north* and from the four quarters of the world where they have been scattered ; also from Babylon, in the land of Chaldea, must Zion's *captives* hasten, in future, as in the past (Isa. xlviii. 20) ; for Babylon is to be rebuilt (Zech. v. 11), and there (Mic. iv. 10), from Jerusalem, will the Jews be yet carried *captive* (Zech. xiv. 2).

8 For thus saith the Lord of hosts ; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you : for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

"The time of the redeemed is come" (Isa. lxiii. 4), *after the glory* hath appeared and their deliverance taken place; the day of the Lord's vengeance for the controversy of Zion (Isa. xxxiv. 8) will come upon all Gentile nations that oppressed the Jews, because wrong done to Israel will be judged by Jehovah, as injury done to Himself in the tenderest part (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

9 For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me.

This is the time when He will "shake all nations," giving the world its last great shaking (Hag. ii. 6; iii. 21, 22), "that the things which cannot be shaken may remain" (Heb. xii. 27). Then shall a great spoil be divided in Israel, "and Israel (the lame man) shall take the prey" (Isa. xxxiii. 23; Zech. xiv. 14; Zeph. ii. 9): "the house of Israel shall possess them" (their Gentile enemies) "*in the land of the Lord* for servants and handmaids; and they shall take them *captives* whose captives they were; and" (saved Israelites) "shall rule over their oppressors" (Isa. xiv. 2). These shall be *a spoil* to their former servants (Jer. xxx. 16), who shall "joy before the Lord according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the *spoil*" (Isa. ix. 3). Not only shall the Jews then know the truth of this prophecy by Zechariah (verse 11), but they shall also know that *Jesus* is Jehovah (Ezek xxxvi. 37, 38): for "this will be in the time to come, in the days of the Messiah."—Kimchi.

10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.

This is the same promise, for the same time, as in Zeph. iii. 14, 15, "Sing, O daughter of Zion: shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the

Lord, is in the *midst* of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more." "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem" (Isa. lii. 9).

11 And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

All nations shall serve Him there for ever and ever (Rev. xi. 15) *when* He has "asked the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession" (Psa. ii. 8; Psa. lxxv. 1, 2). In that day all nations shall come and worship before thee and glorify thy name for evermore (Psa. lxxxvi. 9): "Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and pray before the Lord" (Zech. viii. 20-22; Isa. ii. 3; Mic. iv. 1-4). Then Jehovah Jesus will dwell in the *midst* of his people in Jerusalem (Zeph. iii. 15), "and reign before his ancients gloriously" (Isa. xxiv. 23; Mic. iv. 6, 7).

Kimchi says, "It is right to interpret this prophecy, as far as 'his holy habitation,' of *the future*, in the days of the Messiah, because it is said, 'Many nations shall be joined to the Lord, viz., all flesh, and this we did not see during the second temple;'" but he thinks the rest of what he calls the "parashah" refers to the time of the second temple, because it speaks of Joshua and Zerubbabel.

12 And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

The Lord (as a Jew of the tribe of Judah) must have his portion in the promised land *when* the spoil is divided (Isa. liii. 12).

There is much about the Prince's portion in Ezekiel. The Prince, however, there mentioned will only be the Lord's delegate on earth, not the Lord Himself, who, in a very superior way, will be "the *Prince* of the kings of



the earth" (Rev. i. 5). He will inherit the whole of Immanuel's land *and all its people*, for "The Lord's portion is his *people*; *Jacob* is the lot of his inheritance" (Deut. xxxii. 9); and, in a peculiar manner, His presence and Sheekinah's glory will dwell in Jerusalem, of which it is written in the Psalms, as it is here, "The Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for His habitation. This (He saith) is my rest for ever: *here will I dwell*; for I have desired it" (Psa. cxxxii. 13, 14).

13 Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.

Now "His holy habitation" is in heaven (1 Tim. vi. 16), whence His throne in the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxii. 3) will come down out of heaven from God (Rev. xxi. 2, 10) into the new heavens over the regenerated earth, of which time of the kingdom, it is said, "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool" (Isa. lxvi. 1).

### CHAPTER III.

1 And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

2 And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; *is* not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

AND "he" (the angel of chapter i. 9) showed me Joshua the high priest, standing before the Logos, and Satan at his right hand, in special power of those days, to resist Joshua. But Satan shall be rebuked, for when the Lord shall resume direct dealings with the Jewish people in Jerusalem, He will rebuke their great enemy the accuser (Rev. xii. 10), by casting him and his angels out of heaven for ever, into the land of Israel (Rev. xii. 7-9),

and shortly afterwards rescue the persecuted repentant Jewish remnant (the lawful captive, Isa. xlix. 24, 25) as a brand from the burning that will take place there in "the last days" (Mal. iv. 1).

3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

This verse sets forth Joshua as the representative of the Jewish nation, clothed in the filthy garments of their national sins and their own legal righteousness, which, at the first advent, they would not exchange for the Redeemer's perfect righteousness (Rom. x. 3); but at the second advent will gladly confess sin (Isa. lix. 12-14), and cast aside their righteousnesses, calling them "filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6), praying "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psa. li. 7).

4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

The Lord will yet pardon Israel's sins according to his invitation in Isa. i. 16-19, first purely purging out all their dross, and taking away all their tin (Isa. i. 25, 27). He will take away the iniquity of Israel's land in one day (the day of his appearing), verse 9; and then he will clothe Israel with change of raiment, and give the nation bridal attire (Isa. lxi. 10). "The oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isa. lxi. 3).

"Then the unclean spirit shall pass out of the land" of Israel (Zech. xiii. 2), "and a nation shall be born at once" (Isa. lxvi. 8). The remnant of Judah shall come forth from tribulation "all holy" (Isa. iv. 2-4), purified from dross as metals in a furnace of fire (Ezek. xxii.

18-22); so purified in that furnace (Mal. iii. 2, 3) that "in those days and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be none*; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jer. l. 20): the lost ten tribes being also purified, and sinners purged out from among them in the wilderness (Ezek. xx. 33-38).

5 And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.

Jehovah's command that a fair mitre should be set upon the representative Joshua's head, pre-supposes the nation's *repentance*, and betokens that redeemed Israel will actually become a royal priesthood to Jehovah (Isa. lxi. 6), and a royal diadem in the hand of the Lord Isa. lxii. 3. Israel will then say, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isa. lxi. 10), for Jehovah is their righteousness (Jer. xxiii. 6; Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16).

6 And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying,

7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts: If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.

It was protested unto Joshua by the Lord himself, just as it is protested unto the Jews by Isaiah the prophet, that it is only on condition that they "cease to do evil and learn to do well" that the repentant remnant can "inherit the land and dwell therein for ever" (Psa. xxxvii. 29, 34, 40). *If* they consider their ways, and *if* they keep Jehovah's charge, they shall become priests and

ministers of His house, the temple and its courts (Ezek. xliv. 15-17): and he will not only give them high "places" of their own (Hab. iii. 19; Isa. lviii. 13, 14), but those also of their enemies (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

8 Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they *are* men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.

Of course this was a prophecy to the Jewish nation (to whom the "Son" was promised and given) (Isa. vii. 14; Isa. ix. 6) of *the first* appearance of "the Branch," which was "as a tender shoot out of a dry ground" (Isa. liii. 2); but we admit this only because the greater prophecy necessarily contains the lesser; not because it is visible here in the unfulfilled prophecy of this verse, which relates to the future revelation of *the Branch* (Zech. vi. 12, 13), "the stem and root of Jesse," who is to be a King upon his throne, of whom Isaiah says, "Behold, a *King* shall reign in righteousness" (Isa. xxxii. 1).

9 For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone *shall be* seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

He is the "stone of Israel" (Gen. xlix. 24) who, at his first coming, was a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to self-righteous Jews; but at his second advent shall come forth as the "head stone," and be greeted with shoutings, "grace, grace unto it" (Zech. iv. 7). Jehovah-Jesus is the precious stone (Rev. iv. 2, 3), whose seven eyes (which Scripture informs us) "are the seven spirits of God," like seven lamps of fire burning before His throne (Rev. iv. 5), denote the plenitude of knowledge and of power with which "the eyes of the Lord" will run to and fro through the whole earth (Rev. v. 6; Zech. iv. 10) in the eventful time immediately preceding

the blessed day of his appearing: when, having died long ago for "*that nation*" (John xi. 50, 51), he will open the all-atoning fountain of his blood (Zech. xiii. 1) and entirely remove the iniquity of Israel and Israel's land, so that "a nation shall be born at once" (Isa. lxvi. 8), for graven on the palms of his hands is the name of Zion (Isa. xlix. 16), even as the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were engraved on the breast-plate of the typical Aaronic high priest (Exod. xxviii. 29).

10 In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.

Judah and Israel being then re-united (as two sticks joined together) into one nation for ever, shall never more be separated (Ezek. xxxvii. 16-22; Amos ix. 14, 15), but "shall dwell together in unity as brethren" (Psa. cxxxiii. 1), "under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psa. xci. 1); calling all men in that "delightful land" (Mal. iii. 12) of the vine and fig tree their neighbours—the vine and fig tree being both emblems of Israel and of the Lord's Jewish vineyard (Isa. v. 1-4; Joel i. 7).

## CHAPTER IV.

1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep,

2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right *side* of the bowl, and the other upon the left *side* thereof.

4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What *are* these, my lord?

5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

ZECHARIAH tells the angel that talked with him that in this vision he saw a golden candlestick with seven lamps. It is like that which Moses was commanded to make for the sanctuary (Exod. xxv. 31-37). Here we believe it symbolizes the Jewish Church in Jerusalem, and that the bowl full of oil with which the seven lamps were supplied, means the Spirit of God which produced the light. The two olive trees primarily represent Zerubbabel and Joshua, typical of Messiah as the king and high priest of Israel.

6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This *is* the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

7 Who *art* thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *thou shalt become* a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone *thereof* with shoutings, *crying*, Grace, grace unto it.

8 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

9 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.

10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel *with* those seven; they *are* the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

That one of the olive trees represented Zerubbabel is proved by the encouraging message sent to him. If difficulties, even great and high as a mountain, encountered him in his work of restoration, so as to daunt and depress him, let him be strengthened to go forward, for Jehovah of Hosts promises that by the power and might of His spirit, Zerubbabel, who had laid the foundation stone of the temple shortly before, shall be blest to finish it—he shall see the top stone put upon it amid the joyful shoutings of those who even, at the first (the day of small things), doubted whereto the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel would attain. By the ever-watchful eyes of

Jehovah surveying the whole land, and by His good providence, Zerubbabel would succeed in all his undertakings: then despisers should know the Lord had sent that builder.

11 Then answered I, and said unto him, What *are* these two olive trees upon the right *side* of the candlestick and upon the left *side* thereof?

12 And I answered again, and said unto him, What *be* these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?

13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these *be*? And I said, No, my lord.

14 Then said he, These *are* the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

Three times did Zechariah ask this question—answered only with the information that the two olive trees were “two anointed ones” (persons anointed with holy oil) who stand by or serve faithfully the Lord of all Israel’s land.

But is there nothing more to be found in this chapter?

Can we not see that the two olive trees are typical of the two Jewish prophets, who are explained in the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse, to mean Jehovah’s two witnesses for His truth in the *last days*?

And in *that* day when “the enemy shall come in like a flood,” the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him (Isa. lix. 19), and such an outpouring of the Spirit shall then take place, that the mighty and wonderful things the Lord will enable his servants to perform, shall be by no power or might of theirs, but by “*my spirit* saith the Lord of hosts.”

Is not the Messiah, who was the stumbling-stone and rock of offence to the Jewish people, the sure and precious foundation stone laid in Zion (Isa. xxviii. 16), the ante-type of Zerubbabel, who is to be the true *Restorer* of Jerusalem to everlasting blessedness? Is it not written,

when the Lord shall appear in glory, He shall build up Zion and raise the tabernacle of David which is fallen down? And is He not the high-priest who is then to bless all people, and set up a temple which will be the house of prayer for all nations, with a Jewish form of worship that is to last for ever?

Before Him all difficulties will vanish. Even great Babylon, the "destroying mountain" (Jer. li. 24-26), shall become literally a desolate plain (Isa. xiii. 19-22) when the glorious Messiah is brought forth "the *second* time, without sin unto salvation," as the head-stone ("the stone of Israel," Gen. xlix. 24), with shoutings of joyful recognition from the repentant remnant of the Jewish nation that formerly rejected Him; who, "in the day of His power" (Psa. cx. 3), will exclaim, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us, this is *the Lord*; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. xxv. 9); "The stone which the builders refused, *is become* the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes: this is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psa. cxviii. 22-24).

As surely as Zerubbabel was permitted to lay the foundation of that *house* which has been long destroyed, so surely shall the anti-typical Zerubbabel build another that will last for ever. Except in Hag. ii. 9, Scripture always speaks as if there never was more than one house or temple from first to last. There is an example of this in Mal. iii. 1, 2, and another in Dan. viii. 14, which mentions a cleansing, doubtless by fire, that will utterly destroy that future temple where the man of sin will set himself up to be worshipped (2 Thess. ii. 4), so that a temple which is to be "the house of prayer for all nations" will be required and *built*, as predicted in Zech. vi. 12, 13. There it is written, "Behold the man whose



name is The Branch . . . . he shall build the temple of the Lord ;” and to show that it is no spiritual temple that is here spoken of, it is added, “and they that are afar off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord :” and then ye (the Jews) shall know the truth of this vision sent by Zechariah *if* they will diligently *obey* the voice of the Lord their God by keeping his commandments (Zech. i. 4).

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## CHAPTER V.

WE have previously endeavoured (page 8) to explain how the most distant events were seen by prophets, in spiritual vision, as clearly as those nearest accomplishment. We are, therefore, not surprised to find the contents of this chapter *future*, relating to the time when the Lord will renew direct and miraculous dealing with the Jews ; and, in order to resume and finish their wonderful history, will revive the strength of their enemies and permit great Babylon to be rebuilt.

1 Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll.

2 And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof *is* twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.”

Here we have another *emblem*—a roll flying through the air, like a parchment of great dimensions, in which we may suppose—for it is not so expressly stated—are enrolled all the transgressions of Jehovah’s “holy, just, and good” law, committed by the Jews in the time when Jehovah will make inquisition for iniquity, and two-thirds of the restored Jews are to be cut off *in* the land, on account of their sins (Zech. xiii. 8 ; Psa. xxxvii. 22, 34).

3 Then said he unto me, This *is* the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off *as* on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off *as* on that side according to it.

4 I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.

A peculiar "curse" or malediction will then be manifested on "the face of the whole earth" (land of Israel) against those who have broken, or are then breaking, the third and the eighth commandments; the consequences of which will be literal and miraculous—contrary to anything experienced by the impious and dishonest in time past or present.

5 Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth.

As in the preceding vision, so here, it is "the angel that talked" with Zechariah that tells him to look again.

6 And I said, What *is* it? And he said, This *is* an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This *is* their resemblance through all the earth.

And on the "earth," or land of Israel, he saw an ephah, which commentators have explained to be like a large iron measure, longer than broad, with a flat iron lid fastened with hinges at the back, the lid being open.

7 And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this *is* a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah.

Besides the ephah, the prophet also saw "a talent of lead lifted up" in the air, ready to be used for a purpose soon to appear. Then he saw "a woman," emblematic of a city in which "wickedness" will reign. She is represented as seated in the *midst* of the iron chest or ephah.

8 And he said, This *is* wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.

The angel who said, "This is *wickedness*," had cast the representative woman into the midst of the ephah, and then it is said he cast down the talent of lead upon the closed lid of it.

9 Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind *was* in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven.

The two women with wings like a stork may be emblematic of the power and speed with which, what the ephah betokens, will be effected and made to appear in the time predicted. It moves or goes forth as from the "earth," or land of Palestine, for that is the centre and subject of all vision and prophecy.

10 Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah?

11 And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.

The question *Where* are the women with wings to take the ephah so quickly? is plainly answered by "the angel," who says, to build the city of wickedness in the land of Shinar, meaning, to rebuild the city of *Babylon* in the land of Chaldea, for the land of *Shinar* means the land of the Chaldeans.

As the name of Babylon does not appear here, we must prove, from other Scriptures, that it is to be built and "established" (for a time) "upon her own base"—viz., her present ruined site. Because the city of Babylon is to be *destroyed* (Isa. xiii. 19-22; Jer. li. 29), it must, of course, be previously rebuilt. Its final destruction is to be *sudden* (Isa. xlvii. 11; Jer. li. 8; Psa. cxxxvii. 7-9),

*after* the Lord has given rest to Israel (Jer. l. 34); which is very different from its former destruction. This is another proof of its being restored again.

The first conquerors of the Jews' land came from Babylon, and Scripture makes it plain the last will do so too; for thus saith the Lord, "Lo, I raise up the *Chaldeans*, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places that are not theirs" (Hab. i. 6). And when the Antichrist, who is called "the *Assyrian*," and rod of God's anger (Isa. x. 5, 6, 24), has exercised his commission to inflict final chastisement on the Jews, he shall be destroyed in Israel's land (Isa. xiv. 25); and then *Babylon* shall be made far more literally "a desolation *without an inhabitant*" than it is now, when *Hillah* exists with 10,000 inhabitants within its walls (Jer. li. 29, 37; Isa. xiii. 19-22).

Then shall saved Israel "take up this proverb against the *King of Babylon*, and say, How has the oppressor ceased, the golden *city* ceased" (Isa. xiv. 4; Isa. xlvii 1-15).

This is but a small part of the evidence that might be given that Babylon will be rebuilt. (See B. W. Newton's second series of "Aids to Prophecy," pages 73-80.) Mr. Andrew Bonar remarks, that "the Babylon of Isa. xiii. and xiv., and of Jer. l. and li., 'is, beyond question, a Chaldean Babylon. Yet it is overlooked that events are there declared in connection with *its fall*, which are also, beyond a question, *future*.' Its 'destruction is like that of Sodom and Gomorrah;' occurring in the day of the Lord's fierce anger, when the heavens and the earth shall be shaken at the setting up of the kingdom that shall never be moved; when the children of Israel, having sought the Lord their God, shall be joined in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten (Jer. l. 4, 7, 20). Yet these things are to be '*in those days and at that time*'

when Babylon, in the land of Chaldea, is destroyed utterly ; and *suddenly*, instead of the gradual destruction which began slowly to waste ancient Babylon away hundreds of years *after* Darius the Median had taken the kingdom."—Abbreviated from Bonar's " Antichrist."

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## CHAPTER VI.

1 And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold there came four chariots out from between two mountains ; and the mountains *were* mountains of brass.

2 In the first chariot *were* red horses ; and in the second chariot black horses ;

3 And in the third chariot white horses ; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses.

4 Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What *are* these, my lord ?

5 And the angel answered and said unto me, These *are* the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.

6 The black horses which *are* therein go forth into the north country ; and the white go forth after them ; and the grisled go forth toward the south country.

7 And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth : and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth.

8 Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.

COMMENTATORS are not agreed, and throw little light upon what is meant by the two mountains of brass. Bishop Newcombe is of opinion they " may be merely an ornamental part of the vision ; or they may denote God's firm and immutable decrees by which he governs the earth : " and for this view he quotes Psa. xxxvi. 6, " His righteousness is like *great mountains*." We think, because the chariots

issue suddenly from between two opaque bodies that cannot be seen through, they may well betoken the concealment of the vision until the time comes for its accomplishment, as we know that the Lord's final judgments are to come upon the land of Israel *suddenly* (Jer. vi. 26).

It has already been stated that "horses" are emblems of God's power exercised by angels upon the earth. (See Notes on chap. i. 8, 10, 11.) Their number here, and being in motion, represents the great extent of power that will then be in action to quiet the spirit or accomplish the will of the Lord in that time and place.

By the 68th Psalm, 17th verse, we learn that chariots as well as horses are emblematic of angelic agency. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of *angels*" (see 2 Kings vi. 17). Accordingly, the angel that talked with Zechariah interpreted this vision to signify "the four *spirits of the heavens*," that is, celestial spirits sent forth from God to execute his purposes in the different parts of the earth—Palestine.

Red horses are certainly symbolical of war and bloodshed; black of general calamity and distress; white of victory and prosperity; and, probably, grisled or piebald mean judgments of a mixed character.

In the eighth verse we find a great difficulty: he who cried and spake unto the prophet, being the angel in the fourth verse, how comes he to speak as if he was the Lord? The answer must be that as he received knowledge of the vision's meaning from the Lord Himself, he, in transmitting the same to Zechariah, used the Lord's very words, and said, "have quieted *my* spirit." The judgment sent forth by the chariots and horses had satisfied, or quieted, Jehovah's wrath against his people's national sin, by destroying the wicked "two thirds," as predicted in Zech. xiii. 8.

9 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

10 Take of *them* of the captivity, *even* of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah;

11 Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set *them* upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest.

The tenth verse plainly testifies that Zechariah's prophecies were all subsequent to the Jews' return from Babylon.

From three Jews named in it, who had returned from thence, and from a fourth, afterwards named in the 14th verse, the prophet was to take an offering for the temple of silver and gold, and of these metals to make crowns to set upon the head of the representative Joshua, the typical high priest. The number of crowns is not mentioned; perhaps two were required, one for Messiah, as "king of all the earth" (Zech. xiv. 9), the other for him as high-priest of the order of Melchizedek.

12 And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name *is* the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord:

13 Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

Zechariah having performed the symbolical act commanded in the 11th verse, then delivered this predictive prophecy to Joshua concerning the Messiah. It is "the *man*" Christ Jesus who is now sitting on his Father's throne (Rev. iii. 21) that is to do all this when He comes to take his own throne and kingdom (Luke i. 32): the glorified man whose name is "The Branch," who (now unseen is building a *spiritual* temple) will, by-and-by, return from his "place" (Hos. v. 15) as "the Branch" or tree under whose shadow all nations shall dwell (Mat. xiii. 32) in blessed peace and joy, when His

"sanctuary" (or temple) shall be in the midst of His chosen people in Immanuel's land (Ezek. xxxvii. 26-28), and all nations shall come up (Isa. ii. 2), year by year, to worship Him in the holy temple that shall then be built (Zech. xiv. 16), and be called "the house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. lvi. 7; Mark xi. 17). In Jerusalem shall be the Messiah's throne as "king of Israel" (Isa. xlv. 6), and there, as the true Melchisedec priest of the Most High God (Heb. vii. 1), shall He bless all mankind: there "all flesh shall see his glory" (Isa. xl. 5), for the glory here predicted shall then be revealed.

In these verses the Lord alone is referred to, till we come to the words—"and the counsel of peace shall be between them *both*," where Joshua, mentioned in the immediately preceding verse, seems to be coupled with Him whom he represents. Dr. Henderson says: "By the counsel or purpose of peace, is to be understood the glorious scheme of reconciliation between God and man, effected by the joint exercise of the sacerdotal and regal offices of the Lord Jesus Christ."

14 And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the Lord.

15 And they *that are far off* shall come and build in the temple of the Lord, and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. And *this* shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.

These crowns having been set upon Joshua's head, were to be put into the temple, then building, as a memorial of the four Jews who offered to the Lord the precious metals they were composed of. That temple has been destroyed long ago, therefore the temple here predicted, which *the Lord is to build* (ver. 12, 13), must be a future temple in Jerusalem, that Gentiles from afar will account it an honour to assist in building; for



of this building in Jerusalem it is written, "the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls"—"the sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee;" "the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish;" "the glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the *fir tree*, the *pine tree*, and the *box* together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious" (Isa. lx. 10-14).

It is only on condition of repentance and obedience that the Jewish nation shall see and enjoy all this promised glory and blessing. (See Notes on Zech. i. 3, 4; and Zech. iii. 6, 7.)

"In this chapter and all preceding, without exception, from the 1st to the 6th, we have symbolic prophecies; and in no case do the things or persons employed as symbols represent themselves at some future period of their history, but are symbols of other things and persons. The uniform nature, therefore, of all the preceding visions, decides that the action here described is symbolical, and that it does not symbolize anything referring to Joshua, but to some one else."—Rev. A. McCaul, A.M.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THIS chapter, much more than preceding ones, must primarily be wholly applied to bygone times, and to the sins of the Jewish people, which caused them to be carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar for the seventy years mentioned in the 5th verse.

1 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, *even* in Chisleu;

2 When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regem-melech, and their men, to pray before the Lord,

3 And to speak unto the priests which *were* in the house of the

Lord of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?

4 Then came the word of the Lord of hosts unto me, saying,

5 Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *month*, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, *even* to me?

Some Jews who had been in captivity sent the persons here mentioned, with their attendants, to the temple and to the prophets (viz., to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi), both to offer prayers in their behalf, and to propose a question to the priests and prophets concerning some *fasts* which they had been used to observe. . . . The Jews now questioned whether they ought to continue these fasts, particularly those of the fifth and seventh month, which commemorated the destruction of Jerusalem, seeing the city and temple were both in part rebuilt, and likely to be completed.

The fasts which they had observed were, apparently, not of Divine appointment; they were four in number, according to the 19th verse of the 8th chapter: observance of their additional and self-imposed fasts would have been good, had they uprightly kept them; but self-righteous and ostentatious, they were not truly penitent, and did not truly forsake their sins. Whether they voluntarily fasted or not, they ought certainly to have attended to the earnest calls of God to repentance and reformation by the former prophets. Nothing but this could re-establish them in their former flourishing condition.—Partly from Scott's Commentary abridged.

The question in the 3rd verse is put in the singular, though it was from many Jews; the answer is, accordingly, to "all the people of the land" (verse 5).

6 And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat *for yourselves*, and drink *for yourselves*?

7 Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by

the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when *men* inhabited the south and the plain?

With regard to the two fasts specified in the fifth and seventh month, the true rendering of what the Lord said is, "Did *I* command you to fast?" or as Jonathan has translated it, "Is it the fast of affliction wherewith *ye* afflict *yourselves* before me?"

If they had listened to the words of the former prophets, "when men inhabited the *south* and the *plain*," dwelling there securely, they would not have had to mourn being cast out of their land. If dwellings in "the south and the plain" were then secure, how much more so were abodes among the mountains and hills!

8 And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying,

9 Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

10 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

11 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

These verses particularize the sins which provoked God's wrath against them, and prove how evil that generation must have been to resist such holy and just requirements, which were in entire accordance with the law of Moses, and with Jehovah's commands to his chosen nation in other parts of the Bible. (See Isa. lviii. 3-7; i. 17; Ezek. xlv. 9; Hag. i. 5-7.)

"The Jews refused to hear the word of the Lord by his prophets, and turned away their shoulder 'as a back-sliding (perverse) heifer' (Hos. iv. 16); for they that do not wish to attend to him that calls them, turn away the shoulder, and will not turn towards him."—Kimchi.

12 Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they

should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts."

The hearts of the Jews were then stony as adamant—a hard stone which no iron can cut—even as they still are, and will continue to be until "the time of the end," when they shall be turned into hearts of flesh (Ezek. xxxvi. 26; Ezek. xi. 19).

13 Therefore it is come to pass, *that* as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts:

14 But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

The Babylonish captivity and the first desolation of the Jews' pleasant land, were fulfilments of the prophecies of "the former prophets" (ver. 12): here these chastisements are recorded as accomplished events. So far, then, this chapter is plainly fulfilled. But if the first part of the book of Zechariah is as future as we have represented it to be—and the last part is far more obviously yet to be accomplished—it would be strange were no future prophetic bearing to be discovered here; especially since many other prophecies are so worded as to speak of future events as if already accomplished. The double, and sometimes more than double, fulfilment of prophecy, explains many difficulties in Scripture: it makes passages harmonious which, at first sight, appear contradictory, and confused as to time. We therefore think God's *future calls* to the Jews, as a nation, to repent, may be foreshadowed in this chapter. We know these calls will be very numerous and urgent; in mercy, then, as in past times, God will renew his exhortations to *repentance*; promising, *if* they "cease to do evil and learn to do well,"

*if* they "seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow," their sins, though red like crimson, shall become white as snow (Isa. i. 16-20).

All these calls, however, will be disregarded by the bulk of the nation, who, in those days, will be in league with the anti-Messiah; consequently chastisement more like "a whirlwind" than was ever previously inflicted on the Jews, or upon any other nation (Mark xiii. 19, 20; Dan. xii. 1), is thus predicted by the prophet Isaiah, the cause of it being also assigned: "*Because, when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before Mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not*" "*therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter*" (Isa. lxv. 12; Psa. l. 16-22; Isa. i. 27-31). "Behold the *whirlwind* of the Lord goeth forth with fury, *a continuing whirlwind*: it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked. The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: *in the latter days ye shall consider it*" (Jer. xxx. 23, 24).

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## CHAPTER VIII.

1 Again the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying,

2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.

3 Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.

KIMCHI says: "This chapter contains comfort for the time to come, in the days of Messiah;" and so, indeed, it does, for even spiritualizing commentators allow that in

the 7th verse, the restoration of the Jews from the *west* means from their *present* dispersion.

The Lord only returned *in measure* to Jerusalem in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, but "in *those* days, and at *that* time" (Jer. l. 20), to which we referred at the close of the last chapter, the Lord Jehovah "will be *jealous* for Jerusalem and will avenge the blood of his servants" (Deut. xxxii. 42, 43; Zech. i. 14). Before he can dwell in the midst of them there (Zech. ii. 10-12), he must purge the land of all his enemies: "neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured *by the fire of his jealousy*: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land" (Zeph. i. 18; Nah. i. 2; Ezek. xxxvi. 5, 6).

After which Jerusalem shall be the dwelling-place of the saved and holy remnant (Isa. iv. 3, 4), "the city of their solemnities" (Isa. xxxiii. 20), "the city of *truth*"\* which "the nation that keepeth the *truth*" (Isa. xxvi. 2) shall take possession of: "it shall be called 'The city of righteousness, the faithful city' (Isa. i. 26), 'the city of the great King' (Matt. v. 35; Psa. xlviii. 1, 2): and Mount Zion shall be the mountain of the Lord of hosts, where there shall be *holiness* in all things unto Him (Zech. xiv. 20).

4 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age.

5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

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\* "Jerusalem shall be called a 'city of *truth*' because 'the remnant of Israel shall do no iniquity, *nor speak lies*.' (Zeph. iii. 13.) This is a declaration for all the land of Israel, but the prophet Zechariah mentions Jerusalem as it is the capital of the kingdom."—Kimchi.

Here, in other words, is repeated a former promise of great longevity in those happy days of restored blessing to Israel. In Isaiah it runs thus: "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. . . . There shall be no more an infant of *days*, nor an old man that hath not filled his days . . . . *for as the days of a tree*" (shall be) "the days of my people, and mine elect shall *long* enjoy the work of their hands . . . . for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and *their offspring* with them" (Isa. lxx. 18-23).

Of course many boys and girls played in the streets of Jerusalem after the Jews' return from Babylon; but it is not any past playing (Zech. x. 8) in that city or kingdom that is predicted here, for this prophecy belongs to the time when Jehovah will be "*returned to Jerusalem*" (Zech. i. 16) *never more to depart*, or suffer his people to wander away from him (Jer. xxxii. 37-40).

6 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.

What *will* "be marvellous" in the eyes of the Jews in those days (Psa. cxviii. 23), will be no marvel to Him who created all things at the first, and can new create them by the word of his mouth, for his power is such that all nations are as the small dust of the balance, and are as nothing before him: he taketh up the isles as a very little thing (Isa. xl. 15-17).

7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country;

8 And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.

The gathering of Israel "from the east country, and from the west country," means the whole world, for

Israel has been scattered in every part of it. Jerusalem is mentioned again, because it was the city of the royal residence, and on account of the temple whither all Israel was accustomed to come. The promise to be their God "in truth and righteousness" is similar to that in Hosea: "I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness" (Hos. ii. 20).

The plainly expressed declaration that Jehovah will re-gather Israel, is to be found in almost all the former prophets; it is repeated continually, because it is his determination to *glorify* himself in Israel as a nation. In the prophet Isaiah we read, "Fear not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east and gather thee from the west: I will say to the north 'give up,' and to the south 'keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, every one that is called by my name: for I have *created him for my glory*'" (Isa. xliii. 5-7, and verse 21): "the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and *glorified Himself* in Israel" (Isa. xlv. 23).

Jeremiah prophesies, "Lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah: I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, *and they shall possess it*" . . . . "ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Jer. xxx. 3, 22). "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt: but The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the north, and from all lands whither he had driven them, and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers" (Jer. xvi. 14, 15; Jer. xxiii. 7).

In Ezekiel we find, "I will take you from among the heathen (Gentiles), and gather you out of all the countries, and I will bring you into your own land" (Ezek. xxxvi. 24; Ezek. xxviii. 24-26).

Hosea foretells, "The children of Israel shall abide



many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice" (as they are now) : "*afterward* shall the children of Israel *return*, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king : and shall fear the Lord and his goodness *in the latter days*" (Hos. iii. 4, 5 ; Hos. ii. 18-23).

Amos prophesies to the same effect, "In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof ; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old . . . . And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel. . . . And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall *no more be pulled up out of their land* which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God" (Amos ix. 11, 14, 15).

Obadiah predicts, "Upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and *there* shall be holiness : and the House of Jacob shall *possess their possessions* (Obad. 17).

"In that day saith the Lord I will assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted ; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast off *a strong nation* : and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for *ever and ever*" (Mic. iv. 6, 7).

Let no one dispute the futurity of all these promises because they were uttered *before* the Jews' return from Babylon ; for they contain undeniable proofs that they belong to that final restoration in which Judah and the ten lost tribes shall be gathered together, and so united into one kingdom under one king that they shall never again be separated, and shall so abide for evermore under the shadow of the Almighty (Ezek. xxxvii. 21-28).

9 Thus saith the Lord of hosts ; Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which *were* in the day *that* the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built.

10 For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire

for beast; neither *was there any* peace to him that went out or came in because of the affliction: for I set all men every one against his neighbour.

11 But now I *will not be* unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the Lord of hosts.

12 For the seed *shall be* prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these *things*.

“Let your hands be strong.” These words are primarily applicable to the Jews of Zechariah’s day, and should be understood thus:—“As ye hear all these future consolations, let your hands be strong in the commandments of God and to build the temple, according as ye have begun, for ye see that in the day that the foundation of the temple was laid, the blessing began to come upon you: but before the foundation of it was laid, there was no hire either for man or beast; neither was there any peace, for I set all men every one against his neighbour.” —Partly from Kimchi.

But it is in the time to which this chapter specially belongs, and to “the *residue* or *remnant* of this people” (verses 11, 12), saved out of their last and greatest affliction, that the Lord chiefly addresses this exhortation to “be *strong*,” and to believe the words of the prophets who prophesied whilst the temple was being rebuilt; for after “Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. xxx. 7) is over, Jehovah will not be angry (Isa. xii. 1, 2), as in former times, but will show the light of his reconciled countenance upon his redeemed people, who he then calls “Israel *my glory*” (Isa. xlv. 13): and the consequence will be “prosperity” (Psa. cxviii. 25) in all things hitherto unknown; “then shall the earth yield her increase” (Psa. lxxvii. 6), and the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel” (Isa. iv. 2). “The ploughman shall

overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt: and I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them" (Amos ix. 13, 14).

That all this blessing is still future in the days of the Messiah, and was not promised to the builders of the second temple, is *proved* by words in the verse which follows, "O house of Judah and *house of Israel*," for during the second temple the house of Israel did not return, only some individuals of each tribe did so.

13 And it shall come to pass, *that* as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, *but* let your hands be strong.

14 For thus saith the Lord of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the Lord of hosts and I repented not:

15 So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.

Here we see "the *residue*" in verse 11, "the *remnant* of this people" in verse 12, composed of Judah and Israel, to whom, when saved and forgiven, the Lord will be "as dew," and "as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain" (2 Sam. xxiii. 4); and then "the remnant of Israel shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men" (Mic. v. 7), realizing the promise "*Thou* shalt be a blessing, . . . ." and in *thee* shall all the families of the earth be blessed (Gen. xii. 2, 3).

If God will perform his truth to Jacob and his mercy

to Abraham (Mic. vii. 20); if their seed are still scattered among the nations, and if God has said in his holy and immutable Word, "Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul; for like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, *so* will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them" (Jer. xxxii. 41, 42), then assuredly the children of Israel have yet a blessed and glorious future, to come at an appointed time, in which they will be missionaries to all other peoples, for when they are grafted in again to their own olive-tree, it is to be "as life from the dead" to all Gentiles (Rom. xi. 15).

16 These *are* the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:

17 And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these *are things* that I hate, saith the Lord.

What is here commanded is characteristic of Jewish "*righteousness*," not of spiritual Christianity, though all these things are embraced in the latter. The godly Jews who will finally obey all these injunctions are thus described by Zephaniah, "the remnant of Israel shall do no iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth" (Zeph. iii. 13): those who shall ascend in the hill of the Lord, and shall stand in his holy place, are those who shall have clean hands and pure hearts, who have not lifted up their souls unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully: they shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of their salvation (Psa. xxiv. 3-5; see, also, Psa. xv.).

18 And the word of the Lord of hosts came unto me, saying,

19 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The fast of the fourth *month*, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast

of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace.

In the day of Israel's salvation these four *fasts* on account of sin and consequent dispersion shall be changed into *feasts* of joy and gladness to all the Jews who loved peace and served God in truth.

20 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; *It shall yet come to pass*, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities:

21 And the inhabitants of one *city* shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also.

22 Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.

And then the Messiah's kingdom being established, and Jerusalem become his dwelling-place and the place of his sanctuary—"the house of prayer *for all nations*," (Mark xi. 17; Isa. lvi. 7)—the prophecies of Isa. ii. 2-4, and of Mic. iv. 1-4 will come to pass so literally that many nations, strong in *number* (Kimchi), will come up to worship and see the King in his beauty at Jerusalem (Isa. xxxiii. 17; Zech. xiv. 16), whence the Law and Word shall go forth the second time, making all wars to cease, so that nation shall not lift up sword against nation; swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, neither shall they learn war any more: "they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree: and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it."

23 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days *it shall come to pass*, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard *that God is with you*.

If anything more is needed to prove the futurity which we are endeavouring to make apparent, we have it in

this verse. It requires no explanation ; it should silence all the proud rebellion of Gentiles against the Lord's revealed will as to the ultimate supremacy of Jews over all other peoples. This prophecy even makes mention of the peculiar dress of Jews, which of late, in Russia and elsewhere, they have been forbidden to wear. Their flowing robes, in future, will admit of ten nationalities seeking good from one man, and the reason assigned proves the conversion, then, of all Gentiles to Jehovah.

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## CHAPTER IX.

1 The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus *shall be* the rest thereof: when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, *shall be* toward the Lord.

2 And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise.

3 And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

4 Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

THIS chapter opens with predictions of judgments upon several nations bordering upon the Jews. This burden will fall first upon the land of Hadrach, which means Syria, of which Damascus is the capital.

Damascus is one of the oldest cities in the world; it is mentioned in Gen. xiv. 15, and Gen. xv. 2. It has never been ruined or destroyed; but in "the time of the end" its prophesied "burden" is, "Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap" (Isa. xvii. 1).

This certainly, with regard to Damascus, makes God's future dealings with other neighbouring places (which have been previously destroyed) more apparent. When Israel is restored as a nation they will also be resus-

citated; but they must all be judged in righteousness before they can become the "*rest*," or dwelling-places, of God's chosen people.

"When all the eyes of man, as of all the tribes, shall be toward the Lord"—meaning, after all judgments are ended and the kingdom of the Messiah set up—the land of Hadrach, with the cities Damascus, Tyre, Sidon (Ezek. xxviii. 22), Hamath, and all the cities of the Philistines shall be possessed by Judah, and be of the faith of Israel. Hamath, bordered on Syria on the one hand, and Tyre and Sidon on the other, all will share this burden of Hamath.

Many commentators think this prophecy was fulfilled when old and new Tyre were destroyed long ago, but others see clearly these burdens are future. (See "Notes on the Unfulfilled Prophecies of Isaiah," chapter xxiii.; and "Notes on the Book of the Revelation," page 206.)

The Scriptures contain predictions concerning two *future* cities called Tyre: the one here referred to is to be utterly destroyed; the other, after chastisement, is to be blessed in the kingdom of the Redeemer. This is proved by the 45th Psalm, which is prophetic of the Lord's re-union with the Jewish people; there it is said, in the 12th verse, "the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour."

The Tyre that is to be destroyed, we are here told, will think to be delivered from God's wrath and power by her riches of silver and gold, and by the towers and fortifications she will build; but they shall be of no avail, for the Lord shall cast her out: a fire shall go forth of her which shall consume all her buildings, and the sea shall overwhelm all the wealth in which she will put her trust: for thus saith the Lord, "I will make thee a terror and thou shalt be no more; though thou

be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again" (Ezek. xxvi. 21, 20; Ezek. xxvii. 36). This cannot apply to ancient Tyre, because at this moment it exists and has about four thousand inhabitants. *The time* when this city is to be destroyed is, when the Lord "shall set glory in the land of the living"—viz., Palestine.

5 Ashkelon shall see *it*, and fear; Gaza also *shall see it*, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

"And when Ashkelon shall see that Tyre is wasted by the hand of God, she shall fear and humble herself before Israel; and so with Gaza and Ekron. They shall be ashamed, along with Tyre, to which they were looking, when God—blessed be he!—'shall cast her out.' Gaza's 'king,' who is in her at the time, shall perish, and his kingdom also, for it shall be to Israel. 'And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited by her men who shall be there at that time, for Israel shall dispose of it.'"—(Kimchi.)

6 And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

The meaning of "'and a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod'" is, 'he of the Philistines that dwelleth in Ashdod shall dwell there as a man that is a *stranger* and an *alien*, for they shall be under the power of Israel:' and this is what follows—"I will cut off the pride of the Philistines."—Kimchi.

7 And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, *shall be* for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.

Hengstenberg gives the true sense of this passage when he says, that "the blood and abominations" here stand for idolatry, as the heathen used to drink the blood.



of the victims, or to mix it with wine. The meaning then is, "I will turn them from idolatry to worship the true God." Aben Ezra, in his Commentary, suggests the same interpretation. As to the rest of this verse Kimchi says: the Lord "will destroy the wicked in heart, and he that remaineth shall be for our God. And as to them that remain of them, whose heart is right with the Lord, he shall be *as* a governor in Judah. Ekron shall be as the Jebusite, the inhabitant of Jerusalem, for the Jebusite was dwelling in the midst of the children of Israel (Jud. i. 21), and was their tributary servant; so it shall be in the days of the Messiah. Jerusalem is mentioned, because *there* was the holy mountain and the house of prayer."

8 And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

Commentators generally apply the predictions in preceding verses to events which happened in the days of Alexander the Great and Antiochus Epiphanes; but even Scott says of this verse, "this passage no doubt refers to events yet future, which will far more signally accomplish it." The Messiah will encamp about *his* "house" in the last days, because of the Antichristian army that will make war against him (Rev. xix. 19); and the consequence will be the overthrow of chariots in Ephraim's land and horses from Jerusalem (verse 10), and such destruction of every foe that no oppressors of his people shall ever pass through them any more (Joel iii. 17). The words "for now have I seen with mine eyes," Bishop Newcombe says, mean, "my eye hath pervaded future events, and hath thus determined;" "for I have well noted and pitied thy late affliction," adds Bishop Hall.

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion *shall be* from sea *even* to sea, and from the river *even* to the ends of the earth.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem are, therefore, called upon to rejoice, because their King, who came at first in such meek and lowly guise (Matt. xxi. 4, 5) that the majority of them recognized him not, will come again as a victorious and irresistible conqueror, by whom all the armies of the Antichrist shall be cut off at Armageddon.

In this passage is very observable what often occurs in Scripture; the first and second advents are spoken of in the same verse, or in two consecutive verses, as if no long period of time intervened between them. Both advents were future when this prophecy was given, but they are not so now; and it is only of late that students of God's Word have discovered how invariably and systematically most of the time between the advents is passed over without notice—namely, the wandering time of the Jews among the Gentiles, after the Romans took away their place and nation, until their partial restoration before the commencement of the 70th week of years in Dan. ix. 27.

The death of the Redeemer, more than 1800 years ago, obtained salvation that shall, at his coming again, "speak peace to the heathen," and procure for himself a special kingdom and dominion over Israel, which shall extend from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea (Psa. lxxii. 8), and "from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates" (Gen. xv. 18-21), according to Jehovah's original unconditional promise to Abraham.

11 As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein *is* no water.

12 Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare *that* I will render double unto thee.

By his death also the Messiah has saved all given to him in the blood of the everlasting covenant (Heb. xiii. 20); multitudes of prisoners who could not have been rescued in any other way from the pit of destruction into which sin had plunged the human race. These verses are, however, an exhortation in particular to Jewish "prisoners of hope" to trust in Jehovah, for when they have received *double* punishment for all their national sins (Jer. xvi. 18; Rev. xviii. 6; Isa. xl. 1, 2), they shall be forgiven; and then, as a nation, *double* blessing and *double* possessions shall be conferred upon the godly remnant who will answer this call, his promise being "for your shame ye shall have *double*, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion, therefore in their land they shall possess the *double*" (Isa. lxi. 7).

13 When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

14 And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

15 The Lord of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, *and* make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, *and* as the corners of the altar.

Before proceeding, we must show why the Lord will have a controversy in the last days with the "sons of Greece." It is explained by Joel (iii. 1, 8), where Tyre, Sidon, and other places on the coast of Palestine, are accused of having defrauded Immanuel's land of its "silver, gold, and pleasant things;" besides the greater sin of selling the children of Judah and the children of

Jerusalem unto the *Grecians* "that they might be removed far from their own border." Doubtless we read of their king in Dan. viii. 21, and Dan. x. 20, for the 17th verse of the 8th chapter says, "*at the time of the end shall be the vision.*"

But the Lord's controversy in this great and notable day of his wrath will not be with *Grecians* only, but with the whole *anti-Christian* confederacy to be destroyed at Armageddon, who seem here to be laying siege to Jerusalem, a siege alluded to in Zech. xii. 2, quite distinct from, and subsequent to, that more particularly detailed in Zech. xiv. 2.

We must not suppose that the Lord will save and defend the adulterous and polluted *city* of Jerusalem, whose fate that eventful day is predicted in Isa. xxix. 1-8, and Luke xvii. 29, 30; but when he has bent Judah and the men of Ephraim\* (Israel) as the sword of a mighty man against his foe, he will save his repentant people ('the tents of Judah first,' Zech. xii. 7), and will as truly fight for them as in days of former battle (Josh. x. 10, 11; Isa. xxviii. 21; Zech. xiv. 3). He will do so even still more visibly, for here we are assured "the Lord God shall blow the trumpet *and shall be seen over them* as the lightning," and shall go forth with whirlwinds, such as bear down all before them in deserts of the south (Jer. xxiii. 19, 20; xxx. 23, 24).

In *that* day the Lord shall so defend his *people* that he that is feeble among them shall be as David (when he took

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\* We are taught here that some men of Ephraim will be present at the battle of Armageddon; but certainly not the main body of the lost tribes of Israel, who are not to be restored until *after* that great event, *after* being pleaded with in the wilderness like as in days of old (Ezek. xx. 35-38); and when the complete restoration of all the tribes has been accomplished, and judgments *afterwards* go from nation to nation, all Israel shall be the Lord's "battle axe and weapons of war" (Jer. li. 20-24).

Jerusalem), and the house of David shall be (irresistible) as God; as much so "as the Angel of the Lord" who used to go "before them" (Zech. xii. 7, 8).

The mention of "sling stones" seems to be in allusion to what David did to Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 45-53), as the type of the Messiah when he comes to destroy Israel's greatest anti-Christian enemy, and take possession of his kingdom. Dr. Henderson says, "by sling stones the enemies are meant, as clearly appears from the contrasted form of expression, 'stones of a crown,' descriptive of the Jews in the following verse. The phrase conveys the idea of feebleness and contempt."

Kimchi says, "Judah and Ephraim shall subdue those that are left of their enemies for servants and handmaids, which is distinctly prophesied elsewhere (Isa. xiv. 2; Zech. ii. 9). 'They shall make a noise over them as *if they were drinking wine*;' and they shall be full of the blood of their enemies (Rev. xiv. 20), as a bowl in which they receive the blood of the sacrifices, or as the corners of the altar which they sprinkle with blood."

This explanation of verse 15, given by Jews, is certainly correct, for the seventh verse of the tenth chapter says, "they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine."

16 And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for *they shall be as the stones of a crown*, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

Just as a man saves his flock with all his strength, so will the Messiah save his people, for they are his *flock* (Ezek. xxxiv. 11-15; Jer. xxxi. 10); after which Judah and Ephraim shall be as stones of a crown lifted up and exalted upon his land; and shall become, with Messiah (Isa. xxviii. 5, 6), the ensign (or standard Isa. xlix. 22), by which, the second time, the Lord will "assemble the

outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. xi. 10-12). They shall be lifted up and exalted by the Lord as the standard bearer lifts up and exalts the ensign above the heads of the people; "and to him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. xlix. 10).

17 For how great *is* his goodness, and how great *is* his beauty! corn shall make the young men chearful, and new wine the maids.

Then, "how good is the fruit of their land, how good is the corn, and new wine, which make to grow and bring up such young men and maidens, as shall be at that time" (Kimchi). In those days "the earth shall yield her increase" (Psa. lxxvii. 6), "and the mountains shall drop down new wine" (Joel iii. 18); "the ploughman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed" (Amos ix. 13).

The first verse of the next chapter seems properly to belong to the conclusion of this, for the fruitfulness of Israel's land will be the consequence of obedient asking that the former and latter rains the country used to enjoy, may be restored.

## CHAPTER X.

1 Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

WHEN the godly Jewish remnants are planted in Immanuel's land like a tree by the river's side, and shall prosper in all they do (Psa. i. 1-3), if they ask the Lord for rain to produce vegetation, it shall be given as surely as it is asked; for thus in God's Word it is written, "Be glad, then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain mode-

rately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the form errain, and the latter rain in the first month. . . . And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you" (Joel ii. 23, 26). That earthly, not spiritual blessings are those promised, we are assured by the context in Joel, which says, "Fear not, O *land*; be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things: the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil" (verses 21, 24; Zech. viii. 12). "And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing: and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase; and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them" (Ezek. xxxiv. 26, 27).

Kimchi says on this verse, "In that time, if ye ask of God, blessed be He, rain in the time of the latter rain, the Lord who makes the lightnings, will immediately hear your prayer, and make lightnings ('bright clouds'), and give rain."

"Our rabbies of blessed memory have interpreted, 'To every one grass in the field'—thus: 'In the time when Israel doeth the will of God, He doeth their will;' so that if one man alone, and not another, wants rain, He will give rain to that one man, or even to one field, or one herb in his garden, and not another. We insert this to show the extent of Jewish faith, and how literally the Jews believe their prophecies should be understood.

2 For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore

they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because *there was* no shepherd.

3 Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the Lord of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.

"For the Teraphim have spoken vanity." This the Jews shall know when they shall see the prophecies uttered by God's true prophets are fulfilled. All the diviners (Rev. ix. 21), false prophets, and false Messiahs (Matt. xxiv. 24) with which the partially restored Jewish nation will have been previously afflicted and deceived, shall be "troubled" and utterly got rid of when the anger of the Lord is kindled against them, and he arises in judgment to punish the "goats" (Ezek. xxxiv. 2-10, 17); for he will yet visit His people, and be *seen* (Zech. ix. 14) over Jerusalem (Isa. xxxi. 5), defending his flock, the house of *Judah*, whom he will make the agents or administrators of his vengeance at the battle of Armageddon. The expression here, "as his goodly horse in the battle," proves what was stated formerly (Zech. vi. 2), that a horse is an emblem of power exercised upon the earth.

4 Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

"Out of him" (the house of *Judah*) came forth the Corner stone (Isa. xxviii. 16), who is to be brought forth as the "Headstone" (Zech. iv. 7), and "as a nail in a sure place" (Isa. xxii. 23). *Judah* is to be made the Lord's battle bow when he puts down his enemies; and out of Judah, or from among the Jews themselves, will come forth every ungodly persecuting oppressor in the last days—viz., the false prophets and false shepherds already commented on in verses 2, 3.

5 And they shall be as mighty *men*, which tread down *their enemies* in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight,



because the Lord *is* with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded.

6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I *am* the Lord their God, and will hear them.

The house of Judah, and some portion of Ephraim shall be "as mighty men" at "the battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. xvi. 14), when the Lord will completely overthrow both chariots and horsemen (Zech. ix. 10). Because of his presence and the miraculous power he will impart, these men shall tread down their enemies as the mire of the streets, and shall righteously rejoice to wash their feet in the blood of the wicked (Psa. lviii. 10; Rev. xiv. 20).

The Lord has purposes of mercy towards Israel (Isa. xiv. 1), and will finally gather all the tribes from every quarter into his rest, which shall be glorious, and then they shall be as though they had never been dispersed and cast off, which both the houses of Judah and Israel now are. He will "hear," in the day when he has given them faith and repentance to call upon him.

7 And *they* of Ephraim shall be like a mighty *man*, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine; yea, their children shall see *it*, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the Lord.

8 I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased.

9 And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.

The hearts of these men of Ephraim shall rejoice in what the Lord will have permitted them to do at Armageddon: they and the sons of Zion shall rejoice and "make a noise as through wine" (Zech. ix. 15): their children also shall see and partake in their parents' joy,

for the hearts of all will be in conformity to Jehovah's will.

The expression, "He will *hiss* for them," relates to the final gathering of all the tribes, after the salvation of Judah and Benjamin *in the land*, and appears to mean the same as the setting up of the ensign (Zech. ix. 16), or the setting his hand the second time to recover the dispersed of Israel, and the outcasts of Judah (Isa. xi. 11, 12); for Israel's surety hath redeemed them all, doubtless on the cross, though as yet they know it not. After all the things prophesied against them shall have come to pass, the ten lost tribes in the far distant countries where they now abide, shall "remember" Jehovah, shall "turn" morally to seek him with all their heart (Deut. iv. 29, 30; xxx. 1-3); and shall "return" actually to Canaan with their children (Isa. xlix. 22): and when graft-in again to their own olive-tree (Rom. xi. 23, 24) "they shall increase" as they did formerly (Heb. xi. 12), and so again become as the stars of heaven or the sand of the sea for multitude (Hos. i. 10; Jer. xxxiii. 22).

10 I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and *place* shall not be found for them.

The Israelites who will "be ready to perish" in the land of Assyria and Egypt, shall be saved by the Lord when he blows the trumpet (Zech. ix. 14): and shall bring them to feed and lie down on the mountains of Israel (Jer. l. 19; Ezek. xxxiv. 13-15). They will either be so many then, or will increase so much in number, that the land of Gilead and Lebanon will not be able to contain them.

11 And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and the deeps of the river shall dry up: and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.

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addressed as about to be occupied by the partially restored Jewish nation, gathered in unbelief to be purged and purified as by fire in the furnace of affliction, which their national sins deserve. (Mal. iii. 3; Ezek. xxii. 19-22).

That nation is sometimes spoken of in Scripture as a *forest* (Isa. xxxii. 19)—“the *forest* of Lebanon” (Isa. x. 34). The devouring of that *forest*, as by fire, is predicted in Ezek. xx. 46, 47, and hinted at in Luke xxiii. 31. Restored in unblest wealth and prosperity, the “mighty” Cedar must be spoiled and brought down in the time of “the vintage of the forest” to the deepest abasement. The punishment yet due to their national sins (Mat. xxvii. 25) will cause “the glory of Jacob to wax thin” (Isa. xvii. 4); so that after the Lord’s judgments are ended there will “be few men left” in the land (Isa. xxiv. 6): “for the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty; and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: and upon *all the Cedars of Lebanon*, that are high and lifted up, and upon *all the Oaks of Bashan*” (Isa. ii. 12, 13).

Therefore, shall the Lord of hosts send among his fat ones leanness: He “shall consume the glory of his *forest* and of his fruitful field, both body and soul, and they shall be as when a standard bearer fainteth. And the rest of the trees of the *forest* shall be few that a child may write (or number) them” (Isa. x. 18, 19)—viz., the repentant godly remnant.

The “fir tree” and “oaks of Bashan” called upon to lament the grievous fall of the “mighty” forest, mean the neighbouring cities and nations, to be afterwards dealt with, as in Zech. ix. 1, 2; or the “fir tree” and oaks of Bashan may more probably mean the oppressing rulers within the restored nation, for they will howl when the

sword of the Lord is sharpened to make a sore slaughter of the wicked in his flock (Ezek. xxi. 9, 10). We have only to compare Ezek. xxxiv. 1-10 with James's Epistle (v. 1-6) to perceive that these false shepherds are the rich men *in the last days* who are to weep and howl because their miseries are come upon them. Wickedness being come to the full (Dan. viii. 23), the Lord will have such a controversy with them that he will come near in judgment, and be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts (Mal. iii. 5). A dreadful description of this evil generation is to be found in Mic. vii. 2-6.

6 For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord: but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver *them*.

Verily, the Lord cannot pity such a nation as this; and will neither deliver the remnant nor the land, till he has chastised the flock by the hand of their "king," who shall tread them down like the mire in the streets (Isa. x. 5, 6); this king being the false Messiah who shall "plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas on the glorious holy mountain" (Dan. xi. 45); and usurp the Lord's throne as the "profane wicked prince of Israel" for forty-two months, until "iniquity shall have an end" (Ezek. xxi. 25-27).

We would here remark that we do not exclude a primary application of this prophecy to the excision of the flock by the sword of Titus (Matt. xxii. 7), but only a partial and very primary one, for the chapter ends with direct reference to the *idol* shepherd who will inflict the last and worst slaughter of the flock (ver. 15-17).

7 And I will feed the flock of slaughter, *even* you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock.

"It is evident that the prophet performed some symbolical actions, as emblems of the events predicted; but doubtless Christ was here specially intended."—Scott. Of "the flock of slaughter" in the last days, as much as two-thirds are to be cut off and die: but in the same flock will be "an afflicted and *poor* people" (Zeph. iii. 12, 13), who are to be fed (ver. 4), and so blest to repent and keep the truth, they will speak often one to another of the Lord, and think upon His name: "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. iii. 16, 17). In these saved Jews we recognize the righteous remnant who will repent during the great tribulation, and therefore will be left in the land, to dwell therein for ever (Psa. xxxvii. 29); of whom it is written, "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, 'It is my people,' and they shall say, 'The Lord is my God'" (Zech. xiii. 8, 9). Thus, verily, shall this part of the flock be fed, not by Zechariah, but by the Lord.

Zechariah, however, took unto him the two symbolic staves which he called Beauty and Bands; and as he fed the flock of his day, he is afterwards directed (ver. 12, 13) to claim his price (or wages) for having done so.

8 Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.

9 Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.

When the time comes for this vision to be fulfilled, three false shepherds will be cut off in one month; they will be three special persons as surely as the "seven shepherds" will be literally seven men in the same eventful time, of whom we read in Mic. v. 5: but who the three false shepherds will be cannot most likely be known till the prophecy is accomplished.

These verses prove it is the wicked who *abhor* God, that are to be cut off and die. The time will then be come, of which it has been said elsewhere, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Rev. xxii. 11). To destroy one another, and to eat each other's flesh, are judgments prophesied against these evil men in Deut. xxviii. 53-56; Isa. ix. 19, 20; Jer. xix. 9; Ezek. v. 10.

10 And I took my staff, *even* Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people.

11 And it was broken in that day: and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it *was* the word of the Lord.

This symbolic act will be understood by "the poor of the flock" in that coming day when, by scanning the book from end to end (Dan. xii. 4),\* they shall know that the Lord was not only faithful to his covenant to bless or curse according to the obedience or disobedience to his commands (Deut. xxviii.), but that *he broke* not

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\* The meaning of Dan. xii. 4 is generally mistaken; instead of referring to the present running to and fro among the Gentiles, it predicts a searching of the Word of God from end to end by the persecuted repentant Jews, by which knowledge will be increased, and they will say, "Oh, how love I thy law! . . . through thy commandments thou hast made me *wiser* than mine enemies" (Psa. cxix. 97, 98).



this covenant with the nation until it had become utterly irreclaimable in the ripened wickedness of the last days. Moreover, the formerly "deaf and blind" shall then learn doctrine, and by hearing the words of "the book" (Isa. xxix. 18, 24) shall know that in due time the Lord sent to the Jews the promised Deliverer, whom their nation despised and abhorred, valuing him no higher than at the thirty pieces of silver (Matt. xxvi. 15) with which they bought the field of blood to bury strangers in (Matt. xxvii. 6, 7; Acts i. 18, 19), verifying the prediction to the letter so far.

12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give *me* my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty *pieces* of silver.

13 And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty *pieces* of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

14 Then I cut asunder mine other staff, *even* Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

"This evident prophecy of a transaction, recorded in the New Testament,\* is expressed with much obscurity; as indeed might previously have been expected. It is probable that the prophet performed some symbolical action of the kind here described, before the rulers and priests, as a type of Christ, and as showing by what means the

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\* The insertion of Jeremiah's name instead of Zechariah's in Matt. xxvii. 7-10, where this prophecy is referred to, may be a corruption in the Greek text of the Evangelist; but Dr. Henderson (and other commentators) thinks it probable that Matthew did not insert either name, but simply wrote in his Hebrew gospel "*by the prophet*," as in Matt. i. 22; ii. 5, 15, and various other places. He says:—"There can be no doubt the passage in question existed in the Book of Zechariah in the Jewish Canon in the days of the Evangelist, since it is found to occupy that place in the text of the LXX., which was formed three hundred years previously."

Jews would seal their own condemnation. He demanded his wages for feeding the flock, if they thought good to give him any; and he received "thirty pieces of silver," probably shekels of about the value of half-a-crown or three shillings each. These the Lord directed him to cast unto the potter; disdaining, that he and his shepherd should be valued at so paltry a sum; and accordingly the prophet cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord; either the potter came thither for that purpose, or he was at work near the temple. This predicted the bargain of the chief priests with Judas for that very sum to betray Christ into their hands."—Scott's Commentary.

For this contempt of their Messiah (followed by blasphemy of the Holy Ghost), the prophet in the spirit of prophecy cut asunder his other staff called Bands or Binders, which betokened the brotherhood of the two houses of Israel; and thus upon Judah and Benjamin, and not upon the lost ten tribes of Israel, shall come the chastisement predicted in the next three verses.

15 And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd.

16 For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, *which* shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.

17 Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword *shall be* upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.

This chastisement will occur in the 1260 last days, and will be inflicted by "the fool" (Psa. xiv. ; lii.) or "foolish shepherd" who is to tear the flock for the forty-two months he is to usurp the Redeemer's throne in Jerusalem (Rev. xi. 2; xiii. 5).

The 17th verse denounces "Woe" upon this false

Christ, "the son of perdition" (Matt. xxiv. 5 ; 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4), who is only called a "shepherd" because he will assume the office of guiding and ruling over the Messiah's *flock*. He will be the wolf or false shepherd (John x.) that the Lord predicted shall come in his own name, whom the Jews *will* receive (John v. 43). He is called "the *idol* shepherd," because he will set up in the Temple at Jerusalem "the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not" (Mark xiii. 14). In scripture an "abomination" means an idol. The Anti-messiah's idol, which will bring "desolation," is to be an image of himself, which all Jews will be commanded to worship on pain of death (Rev. xiii. 13-15). The doom here predicted is that which will precede his Messiahship, not that which will close it (Rev. xix. 20); because in some way not explained, he will be slain corresponding to this prediction, "wounded by a sword and did live" (Rev. xiii. 3, 14); that is to say, after being killed with a sword, and cast out of the grave, like an abominable branch" (Isa. xiv. 19), his spirit will ascend from the bottomless pit (Rev. ix. 2, 11), and by Satan's power his body will come to life again, and will so deceive the bulk of the Jewish people "with lying wonders and all deceivableness" (2 Thess. ii. 9, 10), that they will believe him to be the great and powerful king (verse 6) they have ever looked for and desired.

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## CHAPTER XII.

1 The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

THE last chapter closed with a denunciation of "Woe" against "the idol shepherd," who is to come "in the last days" against the Jewish nation as God's avenger for

their sins : this chapter begins with reference to the Lord's Almighty power, as if to give assurance that He who was able to create the heavens above and the earth beneath, and formed the spirit of man within him, will have power to inflict this "burden" upon Israel's enemies.

2 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah *and* against Jerusalem.

3 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

Here, again, we meet with an instance of that irregularity, as to the order of events, formerly commented on (*see* Note on Zech. xi. 1, 2); for in these verses the Spirit does not predict the siege of Jerusalem at the *commencement* of Jacob's trouble, in which the Idol Shepherd (Zech. xi. 16, 17) will be so victorious (Zech. xiv. 2) that the usurper will erect his throne "between the seas on the glorious holy mountain" (Dan. xi. 45); but He very surely foretells the Messiah's triumph *at the end of it*, when he wrests his kingdom from "the profane wicked *Prince of Israel*" (Ezek. xxi. 25-27), and makes Jerusalem a cup of trembling (Psa. lxxv. 8), and a burdensome stone to all the people that burden themselves with it. He will do this *finally* by gathering them all into a place called Armageddon, near to Jerusalem, where they are to be cut in pieces, even though they should be "all the people of the (prophetic) earth"—literally, all the Gentile nations who are to assemble in the valley of Jehoshaphat, whose carcases are to be devoured by the fowls of heaven (Joel iii. 11, 12; Ezek. xxxix. 17-22; Rev. xix. 17-19). This chapter, therefore, deals almost entirely with the day of Israel's *salvation* and previous *repentance*.

4 In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.

5 And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem *shall be* my strength in the Lord of hosts their God.

The expression "In *that day*" means here, and in all other verses in this chapter, "the great and notable day of the Lord (Acts ii. 20, 21), when he is to appear visibly for the salvation of Israel, and the destruction of his and their enemies. It is "*the day*" in which the remnant (for whom there is to be deliverance in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem) shall *call* upon the Lord (Joel ii. 31, 32), and in which the governors of Judah shall find their strength in Jehovah their God.

"The beast" (Antichrist), "the kings of the earth, and their armies" (Rev. xix. 19), being gathered against the Lord at Armageddon "the riders on horses shall be confounded," as previously foretold in Zech. x. 5. Here we learn the great cause by which this will come to pass; the *Lord* "will smite."

6 In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place *even* in Jerusalem.

As the rulers in Zion under the Anti-messiah will be as "the rulers in Sodom and the people of Gomorrah" (Isa. i. 10), these righteous men must, we imagine, be some among the saved remnant whom the Lord will make "governors," and afterwards "judges and counsellors" in his "city of righteousness" (Isa. i. 26).

At once made strong to do his Will, these righteous "governors" shall, at Armageddon, become as flaming

torches among wood or stubble (Obad. 18), that is to be burnt up in the day that will burn as an oven, and shall leave neither root nor branch to the wicked in the land of Israel (Mal. iv. 1, 3), "for every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, but *this shall be with burning and fuel of fire*" (Isa. ix. 5; Ezek. xxxviii. 22; Luke xvii. 29, 30). The result will be the establishment of the Messiah's everlasting kingdom of rest and peace; and Jerusalem shall again be inhabited (Jer. xxxi. 4, 38-40; xxxii. 37-44): built again "upon her own heap" (Jer. xxx. 18).

7 The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify *themselves* against Judah.

The Lord will save his people *Himself*, for it is written "I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them *by the Lord their God*, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen" (Hos. i. 7).

By saving the tents of Judah *first*, the Lord will give a pre-eminence and glory to that tribe, which shall teach all future inhabitants of Jerusalem not to resist or magnify themselves against it. That Judah will be especially warred against by the Antichristians may be seen by the second verse of this chapter.

8 In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David *shall be* as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.

"Swiftly as birds flying" (Isa. xxxi. 5), or "as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be" (Mat. xxiv. 27) to defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The Messiah, riding in the heavens in Israel's help

(Deut. xxxiii. 26 ; Rev. xix. 11) shall be *seen over them* (Zech. ix. 14). "He will roar out of Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem : and the heavens and the earth shall shake ; but the Lord will be the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel iii. 16). In that day the feeblest of them shall become as mighty as David, the man of war, when he took Jerusalem, and as irresistible as God when he as "the Angel of the Lord" used to go before Israel to the battle, because now (Mic. ii. 13), as then, he will lead them and teach his people's hands to war and their fingers to fight (Psa. cxliv. 1 ; xviii. 34, 38-44).

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Though great will be the destruction of the enemies, the nations that will finally come up against Jerusalem will not be utterly exterminated ; in the midst of judgment the Lord remembers mercy ; and as a proof of this it is written, "it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zech. xiv. 16).

10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications : and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* first-born.

11 In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

12 And the land shall mourn, every family apart ; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart ; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart ;

13 The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart ; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart ;

14 All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

The rejected Messiah is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel (Acts. v. 31). "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him" (Isa. lix. 19, 20), and will pour the spirit of grace and supplications on the remnant of the house of David, who are to be saved out of the great tribulation *in* the land, being those who turn from ungodliness in Jacob.

In the 10th verse we have another example of events not being predicted in the order in which they will occur. The looking upon him whom they pierced is mentioned before the mourning: but it is obvious the mourning will precede the looking.

The resumed outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jewish remnant in the last days will cause them to abhor all the abominations done in the land, and make their mourning for national sin deep as for an only son; households apart, men and their wives apart exactly as foretold here, having reference to the Jewish custom, according to which not only did the females dwell in separate apartments from the males, but also worshipped separately. This mourning is compared with the greatest ever known among the Jews, that for King Josiah wounded at Hadadrimmon, a place in the great plain of Esdraelon, near Megiddo. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 29; and 2 Chron. xxxv. 23-25.)

We must not, however, suppose that *godly Jews* of the earthly calling will know or acknowledge that *Jesus* is the great one Lord God whom they worship and from whom they expect deliverance. They cannot look upon him until he has visibly appeared; but when they see him coming in the clouds of heaven, "bearing the name that is above every name"—Jehovah (Phil. ii. 9), and when he has executed vengeance upon all the heathen round about them, *then* shall they know that *he* is Jehovah



(Ezek. xxviii. 26 ; Ezek. xxxix. 28, 29). Thus the statement that these penitents " shall mourn for *him*" (whom their nation pierced) has no difficulty, for they mourn for him in mourning for their long absent *Jehovah*; Jesus and *Jehovah* being the same *Person*, having two distinct natures for ever.

These mourners in Zion are some of those penitents who will receive "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isa. lxi. 3). With the remnant, "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. xxx. 5): for the moment the Lord appears they will exclaim, "Lo! *this* is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is *Jehovah*, we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isa. xxv. 9).

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### CHAPTER XIII.

1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

IN the day that the Redeemer comes to Zion "unto them that *turn from transgression in Jacob*" (Isa. lix. 20), mourning for national sins (Zech. xii. 10-14), shall that cleansing fountain of all atoning blood be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which was long ago shed on Calvary for "*that nation*" (John xi. 51); although the benefits have only as yet been applied to the *elect*, gathering out of the world below into the Church above (Heb. xii. 22, 23). The New Covenant, ratified and sealed in that blood, still belongs to the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jer. xxxi. 31-34), and shall be securely made with them on the day of the Redeemer's return to Zion: after which "the dispersed of

Israel and the outcasts of Judah" will be gathered into the promised land from every quarter (Isa. xi. 11, 12). The nation then will be, as it were, "born at once" (Isa. lxvi. 8): and so purged and purified from the blood (that "is not [yet] cleansed," Joel iii. 21), that "in *those* days, and in *that* time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jer. l. 20).

In that day, too, shall the spirit be poured out from on high (Isa. xxxii. 15) in plenary power upon the whole house of Israel: "*then* will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and *do* them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers: and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Ezek. xxxvi. 26-28). In *those* days, Israel's sons and Israel's daughters, Israel's menservants and Israel's maidservants, shall all see visions and dream dreams (Joel ii. 28); and be all so filled with the Spirit, that the least among them (being then "in the *kingdom* of God"), shall be a greater prophet than John the Baptist was when on earth (Luke vii. 28): "they shall all know the Lord from the least of them unto the greatest of them" (Jer. xxxi. 34); for "*this* is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: my Spirit which is upon thee" (Israel), "and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever" (Isa. lix. 21). "Neither will I hide my face any more from

them : for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. xxxix. 29).

2 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, *that* I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered : and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

3 And it shall come to pass, *that* when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live ; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord : and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.

In that day also, the land of Israel shall be cleansed of all its idols : they shall be utterly abolished, for *then* " a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats" (Isa. ii. 18, 20), and their names even shall perish. The spirit of divination and false prophecy shall depart with all the false prophets and false Christs who are to torment the Jews and pollute their land in the last days ; upon whom destruction shall come " in the day of perdition to ungodly men : " the day when " the man of sin " shall be destroyed with the brightness of the Redeemer's coming (2 Thess. ii. 8) ; and the Devil (the most *unclean* of all unclean spirits) shall pass out of Israel's land, by being consigned to the bottomless pit (Rev. xx. 1-3).

The dispensation of the Spirit will recommence with the everlasting reign of the Messiah, and will be equally enduring—viz., to eternity. It is therefore difficult to imagine how, even in the earthly department of the Redeemer's kingdom, such a case as is here presented can ever possibly occur : but if such a thing should happen, as that a man should speak falsely and foretell lies in the name of the Lord, his parents by the Spirit would be conscious of his sin, and filled with righteous indignation,

would instantly put him to death, saying, "Thou shalt not live," apparently without any sorrow or any compunction; having, we presume, authority by the Spirit so to act as according to *law* formerly" (Deut. xiii. 9). "The *sinner*," thus punished in the act of prophesying falsely, may possibly be "the *sinner*" in Isa. lxv. 20, whose case has hitherto been thought difficult, nay, even impossible to explain.

4 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive:

5 But he shall say, I *am* no prophet, I *am* an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

6 And *one* shall say unto him, What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friends.

Truthfulness and humility will succeed the time when "rough garments" and all "pernicious ways" (2 Pet. ii. 2) will be used "to deceive" (2 Thess. ii. 10), "if it were possible, the very elect" (Mat. xxiv. 24); for these verses certainly apply to people who will be in the kingdom of the Messiah.

We here give an extract from Scott's commentary on this difficult passage (ver. 4-6):—

1st. "Among those who will disavow their being prophets, some will be found 'with wounds in their hands,' which may refer to marks imprinted in their hands, as a badge of their being devoted to some idol; to the wounds that men have often given themselves by voluntary austerities; or to some punishment which had been inflicted on them for their impostures. These they ascribe to other causes, as having been the effect of accident or correction, when at home with their friends: or as a mark affixed to show to what person or family they belonged.

2nd. "As a most remarkable prophecy of Christ follows in the 7th verse, some expositors explain this (passage 4-6) also of Him, and the wounds he received in his hands when crucified. The Jews were professedly the friends of the promised Messiah, and He had acted in the most friendly manner to the nation: but they put Him to death by a blind and malevolent perversion of the law which God by Moses had given against deceivers and false prophets."

Neither of these comments are the least satisfactory. Scott does not offer the second as his own solution of the difficulty, and we cannot accept the first because many Scriptures clearly teach, that all who are left in Israel's land after God's purifying judgments are over, shall be "*all righteous and holy*" (Isa. lx. 21, 22; iv. 3, 4); so that persons having prophesied falsely will not be in existence, having been destroyed among the two-thirds cut off (ver. 8), and thus rendered incapable of inheriting the kingdom of God.

We are therefore shut up to the conclusion that the case of the man here is somewhat akin to that of "the sinner" in Isa. lxx. 20, though minor in guilt and punishment, for he is neither killed nor "accursed." The fact that *sin* in some form or other will, sooner or later, be manifested in *the kingdom* among the descendants of the *righteous* remnant, seems to be established, not only by the verses we have been considering, but also by the many others in Israel's new law, threatening punishment:—for example, as follows—"So shalt thou do . . . for every one that *erreth*, and for him that is simple" (Ezek. xlv. 20) . . . "one lamb out of the flock of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to *make reconciliation for them*." . . . "And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink

offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the Sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare *the sin offering*, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to *make reconciliation for the house of Israel.*" . . . . "And the priest shall take of *the blood of the sin offering* and put it upon the posts of the house and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar." . . . . "In the first month, in the 14th day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. And upon that day shall the prince prepare *for himself and for all the people of the land*, a bullock *for a sin offering*" (Ezek. xlv. 15-22).

In proving that there will be sin committed in the kingdom, we have also proved the restoration of sacrifices in the Temple when the Messiah reigns as King of the Jews.

7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is my fellow*, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

In this verse we have another remarkable instance of the recurrence of the Holy Spirit from events attending the second advent to those belonging to the first, and also a prediction distinctly referring to the means (the Messiah's death) by which the fountain for the sin and uncleanness of the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be opened in the day of the Redeemer's return to Zion.

Jesus is the *man* that is Jehovah's fellow, the Almighty (Rev. i. 8). When He was smitten His disciples all forsook Him and fled (Matt. xxvi. 31, 56; Mark xiv. 27): but this was only a primary and partial fulfilment of this prophecy that the sheep should be scattered. The Messiah was and is the *shepherd* of Israel (Psa. xxiii. 1; lxxx. 1).

The Jews, *as a nation*, are the sheep of his pasture (Psa. c. 3), the flock scattered (Jer. l. 17) subsequently and completely by Titus and the Romans (Mat. xxii. 7). The sword\* of justice cut off the Messiah, "but not for himself" (Dan. ix. 26). He was cut off for the Jews, for the ten lost tribes (John xi. 50-52), and for Gentiles afar off (Acts ii. 39; Eph. ii. 13, 17). When the Jews had filled up the measure of their national iniquity (1 Thess. ii. 15, 16), by blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, they judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life (Acts xiii. 45, 46), and the Apostles turned to the Gentiles (Acts xviii. 6). The Gentiles therefore are "the little ones" upon whom the Lord turned his hand; but they are specially the Gentiles of the Apostle's days, who were called by the preaching of *the Kingdom*, and were thus grafted into the Jewish ecclesia at Jerusalem. The Gentiles seem to be spoken of prophetically as the "little sister" in Cant. viii. 8; not as being little in number or importance, but little in comparison with the chosen nation the Jews; for it is only in God's eyes with regard to the elect in the Church above, that the distinction between Jew and Gentile is lost—and to Israel as a nation still appertain "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the *promises*; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen" (Rom. ix. 4, 5).

8 And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; but the third shall be left therein.

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine

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\* To the objection that the Lord was not cut off by a *sword* it has been sufficiently replied, *sword* is here used figuratively for any means of taking away human life, as in Exod. v. 21.

them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, *It is my people*: and they shall say, *The Lord is my God*.

We come now to a notable example of the gap or break in Israel's history, the same regarding the duration of *time* as in Dan. ix. 27. There it is stated, the Redeemer was cut off in the 69th week (of years); and without marking the gap any more than it is noticed here, events are predicted that will happen to the Jewish nation in the 70th week, which is to *finish* the transgression and the *scattering* of the holy people (Dan. xii. 7). It is plain, therefore, that all the *time* of their present wandering among the Gentiles is purposely overpassed, because when out of Immanuel's land they are never accounted his people or a nation; consequently, in the Bible their history stops till it is resumed in the Book of the Revelation, or unveiling of events which are immediately to precede the second Advent.

In the last days, when the Jews are partially restored, we find, by the verses before us, that they will be so unrepentant and unconverted that two-thirds will be destroyed by the Lord's judgments in the great tribulation, which will be at its worst in the last half of the seventieth week, the 1,260 *days* in Rev. xi. 2, 3; xii. 6, 14.

At that time, when the remnant (or third part) repent and call upon the name of Jehovah, he will answer and own them for his people (Psa. xviii. 2-7); and they shall say "the Lord is my God, my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer." It is predicted that, "in their affliction, they will call upon Him *early*;" and that the Messiah will remain in His place (the highest heavens), as if He heard them not (Psa. lxxx. 1-4; lxxiv. 1-3; lxxix. 7-13), until the Jews acknowledge their offence and seek His face (Hos. v. 15) with all their heart (Deut. iv. 29-31).



This remnant will be left in the land and dwell therein for ever (Matt. v. 5; Psa. xxxvii. 11, 29); so they cannot be of the Church, the bride, which as one body, in the twinkling of an eye is to ascend into the air to meet the Bridegroom the moment he appears, and so be ever "with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17), in the new heaven (Rev. xxi. 1, 10).

So much has been said in former chapters about the remnant that is to be saved and forgiven, we need not add more than that it is the remnant of Jacob, in Isa. x. 20, 21, which shall return unto the mighty God; of whom it is there written "and it shall come to pass in *that* day, that *the remnant of Israel*, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them ("the Assyrian" anti-Messiah), but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy *One* of Israel, in truth."

#### CHAPTER XIV.

1 Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

THE expression, "The day of the Lord" must in this passage be taken in its extended sense, similar to "the day of the Lord" (in Joel ii. 1), when Zion is to be suddenly and irresistibly attacked and taken by the Assyrian anti-Christ (Isa. x. 5, 6), and all the nations that will be confederate with him against the Lord and His anointed (Israel) in "the time of the end." As it is "to take a spoil and take a prey" (Ezek. xxxviii. 12), that these enemies are then to come against the Jews and

their land, at rest (Zech. i. 11), and rich in the unblest prosperity which is to end in "a harvest of desperate sorrow (Isa. xvii. 11), most surely shall the "spoil" of Jerusalem be divided in the midst of her. Another object and aim of these invaders will be to oppose the Lord's purpose with regard to Israel, by cutting "them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (Psa. lxxxiii. 3-5).

At first sight we might suppose, as many commentators have done, that this siege will take place immediately before the day of the Lord's actual appearing; at the end instead of *the beginning* of the 1,260 days of dreadful persecution during the 42 months of the anti-Messiah's reign in Jerusalem; but this cannot be, because the enemy is to conquer victoriously; whereas in *the end*, though numerous as the sand of the sea, they are to vanish quickly and completely, as a night vision (Isa. xxix. 1-6).

It is to be observed that after the foe has triumphed, "half of the city shall go forth into captivity;" some of its inhabitants no doubt will be sold to the Grecians (Joel iii. 6), some sent down to Egypt in ships (Deut. xxviii. 68), and the rest so scattered abroad, that all remaining alive when the Lord comes will be gathered from the four corners of the earth (Isa. xi. 11, 12). But, "the residue of the people (who) shall not be cut off from the city," will form *part* of the many Jews left in the land, who are to be divided into three parts, two to be cut off in judgment and the third saved" (Zech. xiii. 8, 9).

3 Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

Not until the day of his *appearing* will the Lord fight *this* battle (chapter xii.). We have seen in the beginning of this chapter, that, for the accomplishment of his own declared purposes, the Lord will permit the combined nations to triumph at the *commencement* of the 1,260 last days: but

in the *end* of that eventful time (speaking of it prophetically, as if it were but *one* "notable and dreadful day") the Redeemer will come forth (Rev. xix. 11-21) and fight against the beast, the false prophet, and the anti-Christian hosts, "as he fought in the day of battle," meaning the day of Midian; for the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act (that of final judgment), Isa. xxviii. 21. Here, as often elsewhere, "the rising up of the Lord" means the revival of direct interposition by miracle after a long interval of cessation from visible action. The valley of Gideon was the scene of the memorable defeat of the five allied kings of the Amorites (Josh. x. 10, 11); of which it is written, "And *the Lord* discomfited them before Israel and slew them with a great slaughter . . . and as they fled from Israel *the Lord* cast down great stones from heaven upon them, and they died: and they were more that died with *hailstones* than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword." In like manner, "*in the day when the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies*" (Isa. xxviii. 17) "the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and *hailstones*" (Isa. xxx. 30; Psa. xviii. 12-14). Jehovah Jesus will plead against the anti-Messiah with pestilence and with blood; and will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people with him, *an overflowing rain*, and *great hailstones, fire, and brimstones*" (Ezek. xxxviii. 22; Luke xvii. 29, 30); in all "an horrible tempest" (Psa. xi. 6); for in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is *red*; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them (Psa. lxxv. 8).

4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

5 And ye shall flee *to* the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, *and* all the saints with thee.

We presume it will be *after* "the battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. xvi. 14, 16) that the feet of the Redeemer will stand literally on the Mount of Olives. "For, behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and *tread* upon the high places of the earth: and the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall *be cleft*, as wax before the fire, and as the *waters that are poured down a steep place*" (Mic. i. 3, 4). And, just as truly as the earth trembled and shook below the Logos (the pre-existing Messiah) at Sinai (Exod. xix. 18), so truly shall the Mount of Olives (at *this time of regeneration*) cleave under the feet of the glorious Regenerator, making "a great valley" from Azal (meaning Azalon or Ascalon) on the Mediterranean in the west, to the Dead Sea in the east, causing a wide space between the parts of the Mount, which will remove to the north and to the south, the chasm being immediately filled by the waters of the Mediterranean rushing into the Dead Sea: the level of the former being 1,311 feet above the latter, it is obvious how much the country surrounding the Dead Sea must be heaved up by the earthquake to prevent its being totally submerged, and to restrain the waters within such limits as will make that sea the noblest harbour in the world. Access to it from the east will be caused by the living waters forcing open the ancient course

of the Jordan into the Gulf of Akabah, the sand of which will help to dry up the tongue of the Egyptian Sea and create the promised communication by land between Egypt, Assyria, and Israel (Isa. xi. 15, 16).

Neither in the Book of Kings nor the Book of Chronicles do we find anything recorded concerning the earthquake which happened in the days of Uzziah the king (2 Chron. 26), who is elsewhere called Azariah (2 Kings xiv. 21; and xv. 1, 2); but there is reference to it in Amos i. 1: "The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah, the king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, *two years before the earthquake.*" The terror it produced must have been very great by the way its effects are alluded to here.

Zechariah's God will have come *before* the occurrence of this last terrific earthquake, for it is the Lord's presence that will cause it to happen. And "all the saints with *thee*" means, not all Christ's body the Church, which will be in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17; iii. 13), far too numerous, we believe, to be accommodated on Mount Olivet's then extended space; but most probably the 144,000 Jews martyred in the anti-Christian persecution of the last days, whose privilege will be "to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth" (Rev. xiv. 1, 4); although in Jude 14, 15, a more limited number is mentioned, as follows:—"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all." . . .

6 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the light shall not be clear, *nor* dark:

7 But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, *that* at evening time it shall be light.

Immediately previous to the Lord's appearing, there is

to be not only duskiess but darkness (Matt. xxiv. 29), whereby the sign of the Son of Man will be distinctly seen by the people in His land. At *evening* time of *that day* "it shall be light;" its length being typified, but not limited, by that in which, at the bidding of Joshua, the Lord's representative, "the sun stood still, and hasted not to go down about a whole day" (Josh. x. 12-14): a future day so remarkable that it is known only to God, one of judgment and *regeneration*, which may perhaps include the seventy-five days over and above the 1,260 days mentioned in Dan. xii. 12; for the twelfth verse says, "*Blessed* is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days," when, supposing judgment to be ended, the *blessedness* of the Messiah's everlasting reign will commence.

8 And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

"In the day" of Israel's blessedness in the Messiah's newly established kingdom, "it shall come to pass that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk; and all the rivers shall flow with waters, *and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord*, and shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel iii. 18). The rivers first mentioned will flow in different directions, and will never dry up either in summer or winter, as rivers in hot countries now do: but the specially living fountain from under the Temple will flow eastward through a formerly desolate land (Joel ii. 20), and into the Dead Sea, whereby its salt waters will be healed, according to the prophecy of Ezekiel:—"These waters issue out from under the threshold of the house toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea; which being brought forth into the sea,

*the waters shall be healed*" (Ezek. xlvii. 8): and so it shall come to pass, that where there are no fish to be caught now, "their fish shall be according to their kinds as the fish of the Great Sea, exceeding many" (Ezek. xlvii. 10); for the Mediterranean will pour its fish in its rushing waters into the Dead or East Sea, and then even the fishes of the sea shall be shaken at the presence of the Lord (Ezek. xxxviii. 20). The healing waters that are to flow from under the Temple, will be shallow where they first appear, but will gradually swell into "a river that could not be passed over" (Ezek. xlvii. 1-5).

9 And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.

The Scripture here speaks so exclusively of Israel, that the word "earth" means the *land* which is now, and is ever to continue to be very peculiarly Immanuel's land, which the Psalmist calls "*his land*" (Psa. x. 16); wherein his dominion shall be from sea to sea (Mediterranean and Dead), and from the river (Euphrates) unto *the ends of the earth*" (Psa. lxxii. 8). But his sovereignty will extend over the whole world; He is to be "the *Prince* of the kings of the *earth*" (Rev. i. 5): "*all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him*" (Psa. lxxii. 11). This verse is alone sufficient to prevent any such misunderstanding of the declaration that "in that day there shall be *one* Lord, and His name *one*," as that there shall be no other king than *Jehovah* in the whole world. By that name He shall be known to all peoples: His testimonies to this effect, first regarding Israel, may be seen in Ezek. xxviii. 24, 26; xxix. 16, 21; xxxvi. 38: and next, regarding the Gentiles, in Ezek. xxviii. 23; xxx. 19, 26; xxxv. 15 and xxxviii. 23.

10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem : and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

11 And *men* shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction ; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Prophecy goes on to describe very particularly the changes, within certain limits, which will occur in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood, at the eventful period of the Redeemer's second advent ; and then predicts how safely and peacefully the city of the great king shall be inhabited by God's chosen people ; who, though at the end of a thousand years they will once more be threatened with an extraordinary and alarming invasion (Rev. xx. 8, 9), will be so protected by God, that they shall feel "no terror (Isa. liv. 14, 15) ; but shall dwell securely "in quietness and confidence for ever" (Isa. xxxii. 17). "Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation" (Joel iii. 20).

12 And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem ; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

13 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them ; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

14 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem ; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

15 And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

And now, having brought God's chosen nation to the blessed consummation so often and surely predicted, the



Spirit of prophecy returns to particularize circumstances belonging to previously occurring events—namely, what shall happen to Israel's enemies at the great and tumultuous battle of Armageddon, the place to which the Lord will gather them the day he appears to defend the Jews: the day in which Judah shall so fight and conquer, that a great spoil of gold and silver and other things, of which the Jews were previously robbed by their oppressors, shall be taken and repossessed by them; thus fulfilling the prophecy, "they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. xxxix. 10).

Here we may remark that the possession of silver and gold, and the much wealth that Jews have ever had a propensity to acquire, is never mentioned in Scripture with any disapprobation in God to that people; on the contrary, they were always to be prosperous when obedient to his commands (Prov. iii. 9, 10; Psa. xxxvii. 25, 26): and in future it is promised, when they are *finally* restored, their silver and gold shall be brought back with them (Isa. lx. 9); "*wealth and riches*" shall be the portion of those who fear and serve the Lord (Psa. cxii. 1-3), and are preserved by Him "*to be blessed upon the earth*" (Psa. xli. 2): who, in faith of these promises, will pray We beseech thee, O Lord, send *now prosperity* (Psa. cxviii. 25).

In that day of perdition to ungodly men (ver. 12, 13), "the plague" upon the wicked confederates against Jerusalem shall take effect also upon their horses, their mules, and everything by which they expected aid in accomplishing their purpose. We may believe that these are some of the many animals that "all the fowls of heaven" are to be summoned to prey upon (Rev. xix. 17, 18)—"for wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matt. xxiv. 28).

16 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Here we have confirmed a most important truth, which may be learnt from many other parts of Scripture, a truth very much at variance with present (so-called) orthodox theology—namely, that every individual, or every nation “that is left of *all the nations* which shall take part in the anti-Christian attack against Jerusalem, shall afterwards year by year come up to worship Jehovah, the King of the Jews, in true Jewish fashion, as his people did of old, when they came to keep the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Jews often assert they have a mission to convert all Gentiles to the worship of *their* God; and here we see they are right, for when these nations or individuals mingle as acceptable worshippers with the Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles in the Temple at Jerusalem, which is to be “the house of prayer *for all nations*” (Matt. xxi. 13), then shall the prophecy of Isaiah be fulfilled, which says:—“The sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the *Sabbath* from polluting it, and taketh hold of my *covenant*; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful *in my house of prayer*: their *burnt offerings* and their *sacrifices* shall be accepted upon mine *altar*; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer *for all people*” (Isa. lvi. 6, 7).

That the sacrificial worship of the Jews at Jerusalem is to be restored in the Redeemer's kingdom, and that then “the offering of Judah and Jerusalem shall be *pleasant* unto Jehovah as in the days of old and as in former  
yr 4), should be proved, even to people the  
r o admit this clearly revealed truth, by the

following texts: Ezek. xx. 40; Psa. li. 19; cxviii. 27; Isa. lx. 7; Nah. i. 15; Jer. xxxiii. 18; Isa. lxvi. 21.

In that happy time, when Israel's head is lifted up above all conquered enemies, their sacrifices shall be "*sacrifices of joy*" (Psa. xxvii. 6); even the *fasts* of former time shall become to the house of Judah *feasts of joy and gladness* (Zech. viii. 19).

We have already seen (Zech. viii. 20-22) how ready the Gentiles will be to seek and to serve the Lord of hosts at Jerusalem, "the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before Jehovah, and to seek the Lord of hosts. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts at *Jerusalem*, and to pray before the Lord."

17 And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, *that have* no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Here doubt is ended as to whether "every one" in the 16th verse means individuals spared in the battle of Armageddon, or the residue of nations which were present there; the expression "all the *families* of the earth" (meaning the prophetic earth) is used with regard to *nations*, who shall be punished according to this threat in case of failure to come up (we suppose by delegates) to Jerusalem to worship the Lord the King, and keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The nature of the punishment proves the *earthly* condition of the kingdom, and its resemblance in some respects to things as they are now. Irrigation will be more than ever needed in a new earth

enlightened by a sun more than seven times brighter than the luminary of the present world (Isa. xxx. 26 ; xxiv. 23). *Israel's* promises concerning rain when required are sure and steadfast (Zech. x. 1 ; Joel ii. 23, 24 ; Isa. iv. 6).

20 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD ; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts : and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein : and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.

Horses are never mentioned as being requisite in the service of Jehovah ; but here these animals, so needful in the service of men, shall be freed from the curse that is now on all creation, and the bells with which it is customary to adorn them even now shall in the time of coming blessedness be inscribed with the words, "Holiness to Jehovah : " teaching us that everything then used by men, if not "every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah," at least every one belonging to the Temple of the Lord, shall be "holiness" unto Him ; so that in those days it shall come to pass among the Jews, that whensoever they eat or drink, and whatsoever else they do, shall be all done to the glory of God : their food will be sanctified by the vessels in which it will be prepared ; for all things are to be "*holy*" in the service of a holy God, by a holy people (which the Jews will then be—Isa. iv. 3), dwelling in a holy city (Jer. xxxi. 23, 40 ; Isa. lii. 1), in a holy land (Obad. 17).

The Gentiles who come to sacrifice shall use the holy vessels belonging to the Lord's house. This proves they are to be of the Jews' religion ; which is confirmed by the assurance that in *that* day "saith the Lord God, no *stranger*, uncircumcised in heart, nor *uncircumcised in flesh*, shall enter into my sanctuary, of *any stranger* that is among the children of Israel" (Ezek. xlv. 9). "So shall ye know

that I am Jehovah your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be *holy*, and there shall *no strangers* (uncircumcised) pass through her any more" (Joel iii. 17). "*Many nations* shall be joined to the Lord in *that* day, and *shall be my people*: and I will dwell in the midst of thee" (Zech. ii. 11).

THE END.



the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has also become an important employer of women, with 50% of public sector employees being women in 1995.

There are a number of reasons why the public sector has become an important employer of women. One reason is that the public sector has a high proportion of women in its workforce. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that the public sector is a large employer of women in a number of key areas, such as health care, education, and social services. Another reason is that the public sector has a high proportion of women in its workforce who are in the middle and upper management levels.

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